

giobanni boccaccio
the decameron

the fifth, the sixth and the seventh day

book 111



susil gupta
post box 10814 calcutta

MCMXLIV SUSIL GUPTA

FIRST PUBLISHED IN INDIA
January 1944

No 8930 Date 30.9.75

PUBLISHED BY SUSIL GUPTA, 22/3C, GALIFF STREET.
POST BOX 10814, CALCUTTA.

PRINTED BY S. N. GUHA RAY, B.A., AT SREE SARASWATY
PRESS LTD., 32, UPPER CIRCULAR ROAD, CALCUTTA.

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THE FIFTH DAY

HE sun now darted forth his golden beams over the face of our hemisphere, when Flammetta, awaked by the sweet music of the birds, who, from the first notice of day, had been merrily chanting among the trees, arose, and had all the company called up; when they walked leisurely together upon the dewy grass, into a pleasant meadow, till the sun was a little higher; conferring by the way upon many agreeable subjects. At last, when the heat grew a little intense, they retreated to their former station, where they refreshed themselves with wine and sweet-meats, and diverted themselves afterwards in the garden, till dinner-time: everything being provided at that hour, the meatest manner, by their steward, they had a song or two, and then sat down: and dinner being ended, they were entertained, again both with music and dancing. After that was over the queen gave them their liberty; then, accordingly, some went to lie down, and others nused themselves in the meantime in the garden: but the usual hour they all met by her order at the fountain-head. When, being seated on her throne and casting her eyes upon Pamphilus, she smiled; and desiring him to begin, he immediately complied in this manner.

NOVEL I

mon becomes wise by being in love, and by force of arms wins Ephigenia his mistress upon the seas; and is imprisoned at Rhodes. Being delivered from thence by Lysimachus, with him he recovers

Ephigenia, and flies with her to Crete, where he is married to her and is afterwards recalled home.

A GREAT many novels come now fresh into my mind, for the beginning of such an agreeable day's discourse as this is likely to be; but one I am more particularly pleased with, because it not only shews the happy conclusion which we are to treat about, but how sacred, how powerful also, as well as advantageous, the force of love is, which some people, without knowing what they say, unjustly blame and vilify, and which I judge will rather be had in esteem by you, as I suppose you all to be subject to the tender passion.

According to the ancient histories of Cyprus, there lived some time in that island, one of great rank and distinction, called Aristippus, by far the wealthiest person in all the country; and if he was unhappy in any one respect, it was in having, amongst his other children, a son, who, though he exceeded most young people of his time in stature and comeliness, yet he was a perfect natural: his true name was Galeso, but as neither the labour nor skill of his master, nor the correction of his father was ever able to beat one letter into his head, or the least instruction of any kind, and as his voice and manner of speaking were strangely harsh and uncouth, he was by way of disdain, called only Cymon; which in their language, signified *beast*. The father had long beheld him with infinite concern, and as all hopes were vanished concerning him, to remove out of his sight an object which afforded constant matter of grief, he ordered him away to his country-house, to be there with his slaves. This was extremely agreeable to Cymon, because people of that sort had been always most to his mind. Residing there and doing all sorts of drudgery pertaining to that kind of life, it happened one day, as he was going, about

noon-tide, with his staff upon his shoulder, from one farm to another, that he passed through a pleasant grove, which, as it was then the month of May, was all in bloom; from whence, as his stars led him, he came into a meadow surrounded with high trees, in one corner of which was a crystal spring, and by the side of it upon the grass, lay a most beautiful damsel asleep, clothed with a mantle so exceedingly fine and delicate, as scarcely to conceal underneath the exquisite whiteness of her skin; only from her waist downwards she wore a white silken quilt, and at her feet were sleeping, likewise, two women and a manservant.

As soon as Cymon cast his eye upon her, as if he had never seen the face of a woman before, he stood leaning upon his staff, and began to gaze with the utmost astonishment without speaking a word. When suddenly, in his rude uncivilized breast, which had hitherto been incapable of receiving the least impression of politeness whatsoever, a sudden thought arose, which seemed to intimate to his gross and shallow understanding, that this was the most agreeable sight that ever was seen. From thence he began to examine each part by itself, commanding every limb and feature, and being now become a judge of beauty from a mere idiot, he grew very desirous of seeing her eyes, on which account he was going several times to awake her; but as she so far excelled all other women that he ever saw, he was in doubt whether she was a mortal creature. This made him wait to see if she would awake of her own accord; and though that expectation seemed tedious to him, yet so pleasing was the object, that he had no power to leave it.

After a long time she came to herself, and raising up her head, saw Cymon stand propped upon his stick before her, at which she was surprised, and said, "Cymon,

what are you looking for here at this time of day?" Now he was known all over the country, as well for his own rusticity, as his father's nobility and great wealth. He made no answer but stood with his eyes fixed upon hers, which seemed to dart a sweetness that filled him with a kind of joy to which he had hitherto been a stranger; whilst she, observing this, and not knowing what his rudeness might prompt him to, called up her women, and then said, "Cymon, go about your business." He replied, "I will go along with you." And though she was afraid, and would have avoided his company, yet he would not leave her till he had brought her to her own house; from thence he went home to his father, when he declared that he would return no more to the country, which was very disagreeable to all his friends, but yet they let him alone, waiting to see what this change of temper could be owing to. Love thus having pierced his heart, when no lesson of any kind could ever find admittance, in a little time his way of thinking and behaviour were so far changed, that his father and friends were strangely surprised at it, as well as every body that knew him. First of all then, he asked his father to let him have clothes, and every thing else like his brethren; to which the father very willingly consented. Conversing too with young gentlemen of character, and observing their ways and manner of behaving, in a very short time he not only got over the first rudiments of learning, but attained to some knowledge in philosophy. Afterwards his love for Ephigenia being the sole cause of it, his rude and rustic speech was changed into a tone more agreeable and civilized; he grew also a master of music; and with regard to the military art, as well by sea as land, he became as expert and gallant as the best. In short, not to run over all his excellences, before the expiration of the fourth year from his being

first in love, he turned out the most accomplished young gentleman in every respect that ever Cyprus could boast of. What, then, most gracious ladies, shall we say of Cymon? Surely nothing less than this: that all the noble qualities which had been infused by Heaven into his generous soul were shut up as it were by invidious fortune, and fast with the strongest fetters in a small corner of his heart, till love broke the enchantment, and drove with all its might these virtues out of that cruel obscurity, to which they had been long doomed, to a clear and open day; plainly shewing from whence it draws those spirits that are its votaries, and whither its mighty influence conducts them. Cymon therefore, though he might have his flights like other young people, with regard to his love for Ephigenia, yet when Aristippus considered it was that had made a man of him, he not only bore with it, but encouraged him in the pursuit of his pleasures. Cymon nevertheless, who refused to be called Galeso, remembering that Ephigenia had styled him Cymon, being desirous of bringing that affair to a happy conclusion, had often requested her in marriage of her father, who replied that he had already promised her to one Pasimunda, a young nobleman of Rhodes, and that he intended not to break his word. The time then being come that was appointed for their nuptials, and the husband having sent in form to demand her, Cymon said to himself: "O Ephigenia, the time is now come when I shall give proof how I love you, I am become a man on your account, and could I but obtain you, I should be as glorious and happy as the gods themselves; and have you I will, or else I will die."

Immediately he prevailed upon some young noblemen who were his friends, to assist him; and, fitting out a ship of war privately, they put to sea, in order to waylay the vessel that was to transport Ephigenia; who, after

great respect and honour shewed by her father to her husband's friends, embarked with them for Rhodes. Cymon, who had but little rest that night, overtook them on the following day, when he called out, "Stop, and strike your sails; or expect to go to the bottom of the sea." They, on the other hand, had got all their arms above deck and were preparing for a vigorous defence. He therefore threw a grappling iron upon the other ship, which was making the best of its way, and drew it close to his own; when, like a lion, without waiting for any one to second him, he jumped singly among his enemies, as if he cared not for them, and love spurring him on with incredible force, he cut and drove them all like so many sheep before him, till they soon threw down their arms, acknowledging themselves his prisoners; when he addressed himself to them in the following manner:—"Gentlemen, it is no desire of plunder, nor enmity to any of your company, that made me leave Cyprus to fall upon you here in this manner. What occasioned is a matter the success of which is of the utmost consequence to myself, and as easy for you quietly to grant me: it is Ephigenia, whom I love above all the world; and as I could not have her from her father peaceably, and as a friend, my love constrains me to win her from you as an enemy, by force of arms. Therefore I am resolved to be to her what your Pasimunda was to have been. Resign her then to me, and go away in God's name."

The people, more by force than any good will, gave her, all in tears, up to Cymon; who, seeing her lament in that manner, said, "Fair lady, be not discouraged; I am your Cymon, who have a better claim to your affection, on account of my long and constant love, than Pasimunda can have by virtue of a promise." Taking her then on board his ship without meddling with any thing

else that belonged to them, he suffered them to depart. Cymon thus being the most overjoyed man that could be, after comforting the lady under her calamity, consulted with his friends what to do, who were of opinion that they should by no means return to Cyprus yet; but that it were better to go directly to Crete, where they had all relations and friends, but Cymon especially, on which account they might be more secure there along with Ephigenia; and accordingly they directed their course that way. But fortune, who had given the lady to Cymon by an easy conquest, soon changed his immoderate joy into most sad and bitter lamentation. In about four hours from his parting with the Rhodians, night came upon them, which was more welcome to Cymon than any of the rest, and with it a most violent tempest, which overspread the face of the heavens in such a manner, that they could neither see what they did, nor whither they were carried; nor were they able at all to steer the ship. You may easily suppose what Cymon's grief must be on this occasion. He concluded that Heaven had crowned his desires only to make death more grievous to him, which before would have been but little regarded. His friends also were greatly affected, but especially Ephigenia, who trembled at every shock, still sharply upbraiding his ill-timed love, and declaring that this tempest was sent by Providence for no other reason, but that as he had resolved to have her contrary to the will and disposal of Heaven, to disappoint that presumption; and that, seeing her die first, he might die likewise in the same miserable manner.

Amongst such complaints as these they were carried at last, the wind growing continually more violent, near the island of Rhodes; and not knowing where they were, they endeavoured, for the safety of their lives, to get to land if possible. In this they succeeded, and got into a

little bay, where the Rhodian ship had arrived just before them; nor did they know they were at Rhodes till the next morning, when they saw, about a bow-shot from them, the same ship they had parted with the day before. Cymon was greatly concerned at this, and fearing what afterwards came to pass, he bid them put to sea if possible, and trust to fortune, for they could never be in a worse place. They used all possible means then to get out, but in vain; the wind was strongly against them, and drove them to shore in spite of all they could do to prevent it. They were soon known by the sailors of the other ship, who had now gained the shore, and who ran to a neighbouring town, where the young gentlemen that had been on board were just gone before, and informed them how Cymon and Ephigenia were like themselves driven thither by stress of weather. They hearing this, brought a great many people from the town to the sea-side, and took Cymon and his companions prisoners, who had got on shore, with a design of fleeing to a neighbouring wood, as also Ephigenia, and brought them all together to the town. Pasimunda, upon hearing the news, went and made his complaints to the senate, who accordingly sent Lysimachus, who was chief magistrate that year, along with a guard of soldiers to conduct them to prison. Thus the miserable and enamoured Cymon lost his mistress soon after he had gained her, and without having scarcely so much as a kiss for his pains. In the meantime Ephigenia was handsomely received by many ladies of quality, and comforted for the trouble she had sustained in being made a captive, as well as in the storm at sea; and she remained with them till the day appointed for their nuptials. However, Cymon and his friends had their lives granted them (though Pasimunda used all his endeavours to the contrary) for the favour shewed to the Rhodians the day before; but they

were sentenced to perpetual imprisonment, where they remained sorrowfully enough, as they had no hopes of obtaining their liberty.

Now whilst Pasimunda was making preparation for his nuptials, fortune, as if she had repented the injury done to Cymon, produced a new circumstance for his deliverance. Pasimunda had a brother, beneath him in years but not in virtue, called Ormisda, who had been long talked of as about to marry a beautiful lady of that city, called Cassandra, whom Lysimachus was also in love with, and had for some time been prevented marrying her, by divers unlucky accidents. Now as Pasimunda was to celebrate his own nuptials with great state and feasting, he supposed it would save a great deal of expense and trouble if his brother were to marry at the same time. He consequently proposed the thing again to Cassandra's friends, and soon brought it to a conclusion; when it was agreed by all parties, that the same day that Pasimunda brought home Ephigenia, Ormisda should bring home Cassandra. This was very grating to Lysimachus, who saw himself now deprived of the hope which he had hitherto entertained of marrying her himself; but he was wise enough to conceal it, contriving a way to prevent its taking effect if possible; none however appeared, but that of taking her away by force. This seemed easy enough on account of his office, still he thought it not so reputable as if he had borne no office at all at that time; but in short, after a long debate with himself, honour gave way to love, and he resolved, happen what would, to bear away Cassandra.

Thinking then what companions he should make choice of for this enterprise, as well as the means that were to be taken, he soon called Cymon to mind, whom he had in custody, as also his companions; and thinking he

could have nobody better to assist him, nor one more trusty and faithful on that occasion than Cymon, the next night he had him privately into his chamber, where he spoke to him in this manner: "Cymon, as the gods are the best and most liberal givers of all things to mankind, so are they also the ablest judges of our several virtues and merits: such then as they find to be firm and constant in every respect, them do they make worthy of the greatest things. Now concerning your worth and valour, they are willing to have a more certain trial of both, than it was possible for you to shew within the scanty limits of your father's house, whom I know to be a person of the greatest distinction; for first then, by the pungent force of love, as I am informed, have they, from a mere insensible creature, made a man of you; and afterwards, by adverse fortune, and now, by a miserable imprisonment, are they willing to see if your soul be changed from what it was, when you appeared flushed so lately with the prize you had won. If that continues the same, I can propose nothing so agreeable to you, as what I am now going to offer which, that you may resume your former might and valour, I shall immediately disclose. Pasimunda, overjoyed with your disappointment, and a zealous promoter, as far as in him lay, of your being put to death, is now about to celebrate his marriage with your Ephigenia, that he may enjoy that blessing which fortune, when she was favourable, first put into your power, and afterwards snatched away from you, but how this must afflict you I can easily suppose by myself, who am like to undergo the same injury, and at the same time, with regard to my mistress Cassandra, who is to be married then to his brother Ormisda. Now I see no remedy for either of us, but what consists in our own resolution, and the strength of our arms: it will be necessary, therefore, to make our

way with our swords, for each of us to gain his lady: if then you value (I will not say your liberty, because that, without her, would be of little weight with you; but, I say, if you value) your mistress, you need only follow me, and fortune has put her into your hands." These words spoke comfort to the drooping soul of Cymon, who immediately replied, "Lysimachus, you could never have a more stout, nor a more trusty friend for such an enterprise than myself, if it be as you seem to promise: tell me then what you would have me do, and you shall see me put it nobly into execution."

Lysimachus made answer. "Three days hence the ladies are to be brought home to their espoused husbands, when you, with your friends and myself, with some people whom I can confide in, will go armed in the evening, and enter their house whilst they are in the midst of their mirth, where we will seize on the two brides, and carry them away to ship which I have secretly provided, killing all that shall presume to oppose us." This scheme was entirely to Cymon's good liking, and he waited quietly till the time appointed. The wedding-day being now come, and every part of the house full of mirth and feast-ing, Lysimachus, after having the necessary orders at the time fixed, divided Cymon and his companions with his own friends into three parties, and putting arms under their several cloaks, and animating them boldly to pursue what they had undertaken, he sent one party to the haven to secure their escape, and with the other two they went to Pasimunda's house; one they stationed at the gate, to prevent any persons shutting them up in the house; whilst he, along with Cymon, went up stairs with the remaining part. Coming then into the dining-room, where the two brides, with many other ladies, were seated orderly at supper, they advanced up to them, and throwing down all

the tables, each seized his lady, and giving them into the arms of their followers, ordered them to carry them away to their ship. The brides, as well as the other ladies and the servants, cried out so much, that immediately there was a great tumult. In the meantime, Cymon and Lysimachus, with their followers, all drew their swords, and came down stairs again, without any opposition, till they met with Pasimunda, having in his hand a great club, whom the noise had drawn thither, when Cymon, at one stroke, laid him dead at his feet, and whilst Ormisda was running to his assistance, he was likewise killed by Cymon: many others also of their friends, who came to their relief, were wounded and beaten back. Leaving the house then all full of blood and confusion, they joined parties, and went directly on to their ship with their booty, without the least hindrance whatever; when putting the ladies on board, and they with all their friends following them, the shore was soon filled with crowds of people who came to rescue them, upon which they piled their oars, and sailed joyfully away for Crete. There they were cheerfully received by all their friends and relations, when they espoused their ladies, and were well pleased with their several prizes. This occasioned great quarrels afterwards between the two islands of Cyprus and Rhodes. At length, by the interposition of friends, everything was amicably adjusted, and then Cymon returned along with Ephigenia to Cyprus, and Lysimachus in like manner carried Cassandra back to Rhodes, where they lived very happily to the end of their days.

NOVEL II

Constantia is in love with Martuccio Gomito; and hearing that he was dead, out of despair, goes alone into a boat, which is driven by the wind to Susa: finding him alive at Tunis, she makes herself

known : whilst he, being a great favourite there of the king's, marries her, and returns home with her to Lipari, very rich.

THE queen seeing that Pamphilus's novel was at an end, after praising it highly, she ordered Emilia to follow, who began thus:—We are all of us justly pleased with such things as we see attended with rewards, according to our wishes; and because love is more often deserving of happiness than misery, I shall therefore obey the queen with a great deal more pleasure, by treating on the present subject, that I did the king, in discoursing of that of yesterday. You must know, then, ladies, that near to Sicily is a little island called Lipari, in which, not long since, lived a lady of a worthy family named Constantia, with whom was in love a young gentle man of the same island, called Martuccio Gomito, one of an excellent character, and very eminent in his way. She also had the same regard for him, so that she was never easy but when she saw him. He, therefore, desirous of marrying her, asked her father's consent, who replied that as he was in poor circumstances, he would never give it. Martuccio, grieved to see himself rejected on account of his poverty, fitted out a little vessel, with some of his friends and relations, and made a resolution never to return to Lipari till he should be rich. Parting from thence, he cruized on the coast of Barbary, taking everything of less force than himself that came in his way. And fortune was favourable enough to him, could he have set bounds to his desires: but not being satisfied, he and his friends, with being very rich, and willing still to be more so, it happened that they were taken by some Saracen ships, after making a most obstinate defence, when, being plundered of all they had gotten, and the greatest part of them slain, after sinking the ship, he was carried prisoner to Tunis, where he suffered a long and miserable confinement. In the meantime, news was

brought to Lipari, from divers hands, that they were all drowned; which was such an affliction to the lady, that she resolved not to survive it; and not having a heart to make away with herself by any violent means she chose to lay herself under a necessity of meeting with her death: accordingly she went privately one night to the haven, where she found by chance a small fisher's boat, at liberty from the other ships, and furnished with sails and oars. Getting into this, and having rowed a little way into the sea, she threw away her oars and rudder, and committed herself entirely to the mercy of the winds, supposing of necessity, that as the boat was empty, and nobody to steer it, either that it must overset, or else dash against some rock, and so break to pieces; and that, in either case, she could not escape if she would. Wrapping her head then in a mantle, she laid herself down, weeping, at the bottom of the boat. But it happened differently from what she imagined, for it being gentle north wind, and no sea, the boat rode it out all night, and till the following evening, when it was brought within a hundred miles of Tunis, to a strand near a town called Susa; whilst the poor lady thought nothing either of her being near the land or upon the wide sea, having never looked up from the time of her laying herself down, nor meaning ever to do so.

Now it happened, just as the boat struck against the shore, that a poor woman was taking away some nets which had been drying in the sun, who perceiving the boat coming full sail against the shore, and supposing the people to be all asleep in it, stepped into it, and finding only this lady, she called several times to her before she could make her hear, she being fast asleep, and seeing by her dress that she was a Christian, she inquired of her in Latin how it happened that she had arrived there in the

boat all alone. The lady hearing her talk in Latin, was apprehensive that a different wind had driven her back to Lipari, and getting up, and looking all around her, without knowing anything of the country, she then enquired of the good woman where she was; who replied, "Daughter, you are near to Susa, in Barbary;" which the lady hearing, was in great concern that she had not met with the death she had coveted, fearing also, with regard to her modesty, and not knowing what to do, she sat down, and began to weep. The good woman, seeing this, had pity on her, and after much persuasion brought her to her little hut, where she told her at length in what manner she had come thither. The good woman then finding that she was fasting, set her coarse bread, with some fish dressed, and water before her, and prevailed upon her to eat a little. Constantia now enquired of the good woman who she was, that she talked Latin so well; who told her that she was of Trapani, that her name was Carapresa: and that she was servant to some Christian fishermen. The lady hearing that name, full of grief as she was, began to conceive some hope from it, yet could she give no account why, only that she thought she had heard the name before. Her desire to die was now much abated; and without telling her who she was, or from whence she came, she begged of her to have pity on her youth, and give her such counsel as might enable her to avoid any injury that should be offered to her. The good woman left her in her hut till she had taken care of her nets, when she covered her with her mantle, and conducted her to Susa, saying to her, "Constantia, I will bring you to the house of an old Saracen lady whom I work for some times; she is very charitable, and I dare say, on my recommendation, will receive you as though you were her own child; you must study then to oblige her as much as possible, till it

shall please Heaven to send you better fortune." Accordingly she did as she had promised. The old lady, upon hearing the poor woman's account of Constantia, looked earnestly at her, and began to weep; she afterwards led her into the house, where she and some other women lived together, without any man amongst them, employing themselves in embroideries and other kinds of needle work. In a few days she had learned to work in the same way, and behaved herself in such a manner that they were extremely delighted with her company; and at length she made herself mistress of their language. In this manner she continued at Susa, being given over at home for lost. In the meantime it happened that one called Mariabdela being in possession of the kingdom of Tunis, a young lord, of great birth and power in the kingdom of Grenada, laid claim also to it, and assembled a powerful army to drive him out of the country. This coming to the ears of Martuccio Gomito, who was still in prison, and well acquainted with the Barbarian language; understanding also that the king made great preparations for his defence, he said to one of his keepers, "Could I but speak to his majesty, my heart forebodes that I could give him such counsel as should assure him of victory." The person reported this to his master, who immediately informed the king; he then sent for him, and demanded what counsel it was that he had to give him? He replied, "My lord, if I am sufficiently acquainted, since I have been in this country, with your manner of fighting, it should seem to me as if you depended principally upon your archers: now if I can contrive a way whereby your enemies should want arrows, at the time that you had plenty of them, I suppose you will think then the battle would be yours." "Without doubt," replied the king, "if you can do that, I shall make no question of being

conqueror." Martuccio then added, "My lord, it may easily be done, if you please, and I will shew you which way. You have much finer cords made for your archers' bows than are commonly used; you must also have the notches of your arrows made to suit these small strings; but this must be done so privately that the enemy hear nothing of it, because they would then provide accordingly. Now the reason is this: after your enemies shall have discharged all their arrows, and likewise after your own bow-men shall have made an end of theirs, you know that they then gather up, and shoot back your own darts upon you, at the same time that your archers are obliged to make use of theirs: but your arrows will be useless to them, because those small notches will not suit their great strings; on the contrary, the slender cords of your archers will very well receive the large notches of their arrows: and thus your people will have plenty of darts, when they shall be entirely unprovided." The king, who was a most wise lord, was pleased with the advice, and followed it, by which means he got victory. Martuccio was consequently in high favour, and soon attained to great power and wealth. These things were soon noised over the country; till at length Constantia heard that her lover, whom she had thought to be dead, was yet alive. The flame of her love which had been so long extinct, now broke out afresh, and with greater vigour, and with it revived her hopes: insomuch that she related all that had happened to her to the good lady, acquainting her that she desired to go to Tunis, there to satisfy her eyes with beholding what fame had long rung into her ears: the lady commended her design, and, as she had been hitherto a sort of a mother to her, embarked with her; when arriving there, they were entertained together at one of her relations's houses. Here they sent Carapresa, whom they

had carried with them, to learn what she could about him, who reported that he was alive, and in great repute. The lady then resolving that she would be the person to acquaint him with his Constantia being there, went one day to his house, and said to him, "Sir, one of your servants from Lipari is now a captive in my house, and has a desire to speak to you in private; for which purpose that nobody might be entrusted with the secret, he desired that I would go myself to tell you." Martuccio gave her thanks, and followed her thither. As soon as the young lady saw him, she was perfectly overcome with joy, and, being unable to refrain, threw her arms about his neck; whilst calling to mind her long sufferings and present transports, she burst out into a flood of tears. Martuccio stood some time in amaze, till at last he said, with a sigh, "O, my Constantia, are you alive? It is some time since I heard you were lost: nor have there been any tidings of you since." And, having said this, he embraced her with a great deal of tenderness and affection. She then related to him all that had befallen her, as well as the respect with which she had been honoured by the good lady; when, after much discourse together, he went straight to the king, and made him acquainted with the whole story, adding, that, with his consent, he intended to espouse her according to the manner of our laws. The king was greatly surprised at the narration, and, sending for her, received the same account from her own mouth. He then said, "Lady, you have well earned your husband;" then ordering many rich presents to be brought, he gave part to her and part to him, and desired them to do what was most agreeable to themselves. Martuccio was very thankful to the lady who had entertained Constantia, and made her a suitable acknowledgment; and taking their leave of her not without many tears, they embarked (having

Carapresa along with them) for Lipari, where they were received with inexpressible joy; and the nuptials being celebrated with the greatest magnificence, they lived long together in the utmost tranquillity and comfort, enjoying the fruits of their mutual loves.

NOVEL III

Pietro Boccamazza running away with his mistress, is set upon by thieves, whilst the lady makes her escape into a forest, from whence she is conducted to a castle. He is taken, but escapes by some accident, and arrives at the same castle, where they are married, and return from thence to Rome.

THERE was not one person among them all that did not applaud Emilia's novel; when the queen, knowing it was ended, turned to Eliza, and desired her to go on, who as readily obeyed in this manner:—I have a mind to relate a most melancholy night, as it happened to two*lovers; but which, being succeeded by many happy days, is conformable enough to the subject proposed. There lived at Rome, which was once the head, though now the tail, of the world, a young gentleman of a good family, named Pietro Boccamazza, who was in love with a most beautiful lady, called Angelina, daughter to one Gigliuozzi Saullo, a plebeian, but one well esteemed among his fellow citizens; and she in some time began to have the same regard for him. When, weary of languishing longer for her, he demanded her in marriage, which, as soon as his parents knew, they blamed him very much, and, at the same time, gave the father of the lady to understand, that they would have him take no notice of what the young spark might say upon that head; since, should he marry her, they would never own him more. Pietro, seeing himself disappointed in that manner, was ready to die

with grief, and could he but have prevailed upon her father, he would have married her in spite of them all: at last he thought of a scheme, which, if she would agree to it, would answer his purpose, and, finding by a messenger that she was willing, it was resolved between them to fly together from Rome. Having concerted measures for their departure, they set out one morning on horseback, towards Alagna, where he had some friends in whom he had the greatest confidence; when, not having time to marry, and making the best of their way, for fear of being pursued, it happened after their riding about eight miles, that they missed their road, turning to the left when they should have kept to the right, and, in about two miles farther, came in sight of a little castle, when being perceived from thence, twelve men came rushing out upon them, whom she espying, but not till they were almost upon them, cried out, "Ride, my dear, for we are attacked;" and, accordingly, clapping spurs to her horse and holding fast by the pommel of the saddle, she galloped full speed through the forest. Pietro, whose eyes were more upon his mistress than any thing else, followed her as well as he could, till unawares he fell in amongst them, who seized and made him dismount: inquiring then who he was, and being told, they said one to another, "This man is a friend to our enemies; let us strip and hang him upon one of these oaks, out of spite to the Orsini family." Having agreed upon this, they ordered him to undress himself, which he complied with, expecting nothing but death; when, on a sudden, an ambuscade of twenty-five others started up behind them, crying out aloud, "Kill them every man." Upon this they left Pietro, to prepare for their own defence; but, finding themselves out-numbered, they took to their heels, and the others followed hard after them.

Pietro in the meantime took his clothes, and getting on horseback again, rode as fast as he could the same way that Angelina had taken; but seeing no track or foot-steps of any horse, and finding himself out of the reach, as well of those who had first taken him as of the others by whom those persons were attacked, and not being able to make her out, he was almost distracted and went up and down the forest, calling aloud to see if she could hear, but in vain.

Being in this disagreeable situation, he durst not return back, and all before him he was ignorant of; besides, he was under perpetual apprehensions for them both, on account of the wild beasts which are in those places; and fancied every moment that he saw some bear or wolf tear her to pieces. In this manner did poor Pietro traverse the forest over and over, hallooing and shouting and frequently coming back again, when he thought he was going forwards all the time; until, what with his fatigue, added to his fright and long fasting, he was quite spent. Perceiving now the night coming upon him, and not knowing what else to do, he tied his horse to an oak tree, and got up into it to secure himself from the wild beasts; whilst the moon rising soon after, and it being a fine clear night (he not daring to sleep for fear of falling down; or if he had been in a place more commodious, his great grief and care for his mistress would not have suffered him to rest), he sat there sighing and lamenting his hard fortune all the night long. The young lady in the meantime, as we before observed, was carried so far into the wood that she could not find the way out again: therefore she went up and down full of grief for what had happened. At last, seeing nothing of Pietro and getting into a little path, as it was now towards the evening, she followed it so long that in about two miles it

brought her in sight of a little hut, to which she rode as fast as she could, and found therein a very old man and his wife; who, on seeing her, said, "Daughter, what do you in this country at this time of day?" She wept; and replied that she had lost her company in the wood, and inquired how near she was to Alagna. The honest man made answer, "Daughter, this is not the way; it is more than twelve miles from us." She then said, "And how far is it to any inn, where I may go to lodge?" He answered, "There is none near enough for you to go to by night."—"For Heaven's sake," quoth the lady, "As I can go nowhere else, will you please to give me a lodging?"—"Daughter," replied he, "you shall be very welcome; but I must acquaint you that there are companies of people, both friends and enemies, continually passing this way, who do us great injury sometimes; and should any of them find you here, they might offer rudeness, and we have not it in our power to help you. I apprise you of this that you lay no blame upon us if such a thing should happen." The lady, seeing it was late, though she was terrified with the old man's words, said, "I trust to God for my protection, as to what you mention: but if that should happen, I may expect more mercy from men than from beasts." She then alighted from her steed, and went to supper with them upon such poor diet as they had, and afterwards lay down upon their bed with her clothes on, lamenting her own misfortune and her lover's all the night, not knowing whether she had more cause to hope or fear on his account. About break of day, she heard a great noise of people on horseback, and immediately she arose, and went into a great yard behind the house, in one corner of which was a stack of hay, and there hid herself. This was no sooner done but a knot of thieves was at the door, which was instantly opened

to them, and seeing there the lady's horse and saddle, they asked whom it belonged to? The honest man, seeing nothing of her, made answer, "Nobody is here, but this horse came to us last night, having got away I suppose from his owner, and we took him in that he should not be devoured by the wolves."—"Then," quoth the captain, "as he has no master he shall be ours." Being dispersed up and down the house and yard, and laying down their lances and targets, one of them by chance thrust his spear into the hay where she laid hid herself, and which was so near killing her that she was on the point of making a discovery, for it pierced her clothes; but, recollecting herself, she resolved to be still. In the meantime they fell to boiling some kids and other flesh meat that they had brought with them, and after they had eat and drank, they went about their business carrying off the horse. When they were gotten some distance from the house, the honest man began to inquire of his wife what was become of the lady, as he had never seen her since he rose. She replied that she could not tell, and went all about to seek for her. Now the lady, finding that the men were departed, came forth from whence she had been concealed, which he was much pleased at, finding that she had not fallen into their hands; and he said to her, "It is now daylight, we will go with you therefore to a castle about five miles from us, where you may be in safety but you will be obliged to travel on foot, for these sorry fellows have taken your horse quite away." She was under no great concern for that loss, but begged of them to shew her the way, when they set forward, and arrived there betimes in the morning. Now the castle belonged to one of the family of the Orsini, whose name was Liello di Campo di Fiore, and by great fortune his lady was then there, a worthy good woman, who seeing her soon recollected her,

and received her with the utmost respect, inquiring by what means she had come hither. She then related the whole story. On which the other, who knew Pietro, he being a friend of her husband's, was under great concern, supposing him to be dead; and she said to her, "As it happens that you know not where he is, I intend you shall abide with me till I have an opportunity of conveying you safe to Rome."

Now as for Pietro, he had but a dismal night of it, for he saw his horse soon surrounded by a number of wolves, which made him break his bridle; and he endeavoured to make his escape, but was so encompassed that he could not, and he defended himself with kicking and biting for some time, till at last he was pulled down, and torn all to pieces, and having devoured him to the very bones, they went away. This was the utmost affliction to Pietro, who expected much from his horse, after all the fatigue that he had undergone; and he began now to despair of ever getting out of the forest. It being at this time almost day, and he nearly dead with cold, as he was looking about him, he chanced to spy a fire at last, about a mile off: when it was quite light, therefore, he descended from the tree, not without a great deal of fear, and directed his course thither, where he found some shepherds making merry together, who received him out of mere compassion: when, after he had eat and warmed himself he related his whole adventure, inquiring whether there was no town or castle in those parts that he could go to. The shepherds told him that three miles off was a castle belonging to Liello di Campo di Fiore, whose lady was then there. He presently entreated some of them to go with him, and two readily offered their service. Being arrived, he was known, and as he was going to send out to seek his mistress, he was called by the lady of the

castle, and on stepping up to her he beheld Angelina, which made him the happiest man in the world: and if he was thus transported she was no less so. The lady giving them a handsome reception, and hearing what had happened to both, began to reprimand him for attempting to do what was so disagreeable to his parents; but seeing him resolved, and finding that he was agreeable to the lady, she said, "What should I trouble myself for? They like each other and are both my husband's friends; besides, it seems as if Providence would have it so, seeing that one escaped from being hanged, the other from being stabbed by a lance, and both from being devoured by wild beasts. Then let it be done." Turning to them now, she said, "If you are resolved to be man and wife together, I am content and will celebrate the wedding at my husband's expense; afterwards I will undertake to make peace between you and your friends." Thus they were married in the castle, to their great joy, and with all the magnificence that the country would afford; and in a few days the lady carried them both to Rome, when she took care to reconcile Pietro and his parents, who were much enraged at what he had done. He lived afterwards with Angelina, in all peace and happiness, to a good old age.

NOVEL IV

Ricciardo Manardi is found by Lizio along with his daughter, whom he marries, and they become reconciled together.

ELIZA was listening to the commendations her novel excited, when the queen laid the next charge on Philostratus, who smiled, and began in this manner:—

I have been so often lashed by you for giving a harsh and melancholy subject, that, by way of recompense, I

think myself obliged to say something which will make you laugh: I shall therefore relate a love affair, which, after being attended with nothing worse than a few sighs and a short fright, mingled with some shame, was brought to a happy ending; and this in a very short novel. Not long since there lived in Romagna a worthy and accomplished knight, named Lidio da Valbona, who had, in his old age, by his lady, Madam Giacomina, a daughter, the most beautiful young lady in all the country: being their only child, they were extremely tender and careful of her, thinking through her to make some grand alliance. Now there was a young gentleman, who used to come much to their house, of a very agreeable person, whilst Lizio and his lady were under no more apprehensions from him, than they would have been from their own son; but he seeing her often, and being charmed with her person and behaviour, fell secretly in love, which she perceiving, soon returned by a reciprocal affection, which delighted him exceedingly, and he was often desirous of speaking to her, yet could never dare to do it: till at length he had the opportunity and courage one day to say, "Pray, Caterina, let me not die for love." She replied, "Would to Heaven you would shew me the like mercy!" This greatly pleased him, and he added, "I shall study your will and pleasure in everything; do you find a way to make us happy together." She then returned, "You see, sir, how I am watched, and therefore am unable to contrive the means for your coming to me: but if you can think of any method to do it, without my being censured, tell me, and I shall be glad." He, after mature consideration, said, "My dearest Caterina, I see no other way, but for you to get leave to lie in the gallery, which looks towards the garden; and if I knew when that happened, I would endeavour to get to you, however great the height from the

ground." She replied, "If you have the courage to come, I think I can manage so as to lie there." He promised to do so, and for the present they parted. The following day, it being about the end of May, she complained grievously to her mother, that the heat was so excessive the foregoing night, that she could not get a wink of sleep. "Daughter," answered she, "you talk of heat, I do not think the weather so sultry." "Madam," she replied, "there is a good deal of difference between old people and young." "That may be so," quoth the mother, "but can I change the seasons? You must bear with the time of year as it is: another night it may be more temperate, and then you will sleep better." "I wish it would," answered Caterina, "but the nights are not used to grow cooler, the more the summer advances." "Then," said the mother, "what would you have me do for you?" She replied, "If you and my father please, I would gladly lie in the gallery adjoining to your room, and which looks towards the garden; where, by having plenty of fresh air, and hearing the nightingale, it will be much more pleasant than lying in your chamber." "Daughter," quoth she, "be easy, I will speak to your father about it, and we will do as he thinks best in that case." Accordingly she moved the matter to Lizio, who being old, was apt to be a little testy, and he said, "What nightingale is this she talks of? I will make her sleep at the singing of a cricket." Caterina hearing this, kept awake the next night, more through vexation than heat, and was not only restless herself, but kept her mother also from sleeping. The next morning the old lady complained to her husband, saying, "You shew very little regard for your daughter: what does her lying in the gallery signify to you? She did not rest all last night for the heat. And as to her fancy of the nightingale, she is young, let her have her way?" He

replied, "Then make her a bed there, if you will; and let her hear the nightingale." A bed, therefore, was ordered to be set up for her, which she gave Ricciardo to understand, by such a sign as had been agreed on between them, when he soon knew what part he had to act. Lizio, upon her going to bed, locked the door that opened out of his chamber into the gallery, and then went to rest himself. As soon as everything was still, Ricciardo got upon the wall, by help of a scaling ladder, from whence laying hold of the joinings of another wall, he climbed at last (not without great difficulty, as well as danger had he fallen) to the gallery, where the lady had long been expecting him. Now the nights being short, and happening to fall asleep with her, the next morning, as soon as Lizio arose, he began to think of his daughter; when he opened the door, and said, "Let us go see now how the nightingale has made her sleep." Going then into the gallery, and drawing the curtains, he found Ricciardo and her asleep together: upon this he stepped back, and called to his wife, saying, "Come hither directly; you will find your daughter has heard the nightingale to some purpose." Dressing herself as fast as she could, she followed her husband, and seeing them together in that manner, was going to give Ricciardo all the hard language she could devise; but Lizio said, "Take care, I charge you to make no noise about it; as he has now got her, he shall keep her: he is of a good family, as well as rich, so we cannot have a better son-in-law. If he means to go off in a whole skin, he shall marry her before I part with him." The wife on this was a little comforted, and held her peace. Soon after this debate, Ricciardo chanced to wake, and seeing it broad day-light, was frightened out of his wits; calling then upon Caterina, he said; "Alas! my life, what shall I do? The day-light has surprised me here with you." At

these words Lizio stepped from behind the curtain, and said, "Oh, I will take care you shall do well enough." Ricciardo was quite confounded at seeing him, and rising up in bed, he said, "For Heaven's sake, sir, I beg you will forgive me; I confess I do deserve to die; save but my life, therefore, and do what you please." Lizio replied, "Ricciardo, my friendship for you did not deserve such a return as I have met with: but since it is so, you have only one way whereby you may save your life and my honour, that is, to marry her; either do that, or else make your peace with Heaven, for here you shall die." There was no need of many words: the fear of death, as well as his love for Caterina, soon made him resolve, and he told him that he was ready to comply. Lizio then took his wife's ring, and made him instantly espouse her, which being done, he desired them to take their own time for rising. In the morning they had some farther discourse together, and every thing being settled to all their satisfactions, he married her in the most public manner, and having carried her home with great demonstrations of joy, they lived together from that time, with all the peace and comfort that a married state can afford.

NOVEL V

Guidotto da Cremona dying, left a daughter to the care of Giacomo da Pavia. Giannole di Severino and Minghino di Mingole are both in love with her, and fight on her account, whom she is known to be Giannole's sister, and is married to Minghino.

EVERY one laughed at the story of the nightingale; when the queen turned to Philostratus, and said, "If you gave us concern with your subject of yesterday, you have made ample amends by your last story, therefore you shall hear

no more of it." She then turned to Neiphile, who began in this manner:—

As Philostratus lays his scene in Romagna, I intend to have my novel also from thence. In the city then of Fano dwelt two Lombards, one named Guidotto da Cremona, and the other Giacomo da Pavia, both advanced in years, and men who had lived as soldiers all their days. When Guidotto being at the point of death, and having no son, nor friend, in whom he put greater confidence than in Giacomo, after settling all his affairs, he left to his care a daughter of about ten years of age, with the management of his whole substance. In the meantime the city of Fænza which had been long embroiled in wars and confusion, being now brought into a more flourishing state, and everyone that pleased having leave to return, it chanced that Giacomo, who had formerly lived there, and liked the place, went back with all his effects, carrying this young lady along with him, whom he loved and treated as his own child, and who, as she grew up, became the most celebrated beauty in the whole city, and as accomplished in all respects as she was fair; on which account she began to be admired by divers young gentlemen, but two especially of equal fortunes were so much in love, that an utter hatred commenced between them for her sake; one was called Giannole di Severno, and the other Minghino di Mingole. Either of these gentlemen would gladly have married her, she being now fifteen; but finding themselves rejected by her friends, they resolved to try other means of obtaining her. Giacomo had in his house an old maid-servant, and a man called Crivello, a facetious as well as an honest person, with whom Giannole was acquainted, to whom he made known his love, offering at the same time a great reward if, by his assistance, he should in any way obtain his

desire. Said Crivello, "Sir, I can do nothing more for you than, when my master is gone out to sup anywhere, to bring you where she is, for were I to put in a word for you, she would never give me the hearing: if you like this, I dare promise you so far, afterwards you may do what you think most proper." Giannole told him he desired no more. On the other part Minghino made his court to the maid, who had delivered several messages to the lady in his favour, and given her a good opinion of him; she had also undertaken to introduce him the first evening that Giacomino happened to be abroad. Soon after this it happened that Giacomino was invited out by Crivello's contrivance, who immediately gave notice to Giannole, and agreed with him to come, upon giving a certain sign when he would find the door open. In like manner the maid, being unacquainted with this, informed Minghino of the same thing, adding, that, upon observing such a token, he should then come into the house. • In the evening the two lovers, knowing nothing of one another, but yet each jealous of his rival, came with some friends armed for their greater security. Minghino waited at a friend's in the neighbourhood to watch for the sign, whilst Giannole, with his people, stood a little distance from the house. Now Crivello and the maid were contriving to send each other out of the way. He said then to her, "Why do you not go to bed? What are you doing about the house?" The maid said again, "Why do not you go to your master, you have had your supper? What do you stay for, then?" But neither of them was able to send the other away. Crivello at last knowing the time to be come that he had appointed, said to himself, "What need I care for this woman? If she will not hold her tongue, I will find a way to make her." Giving the signal then he went to open the door, when Giannole, with two

of his companions, immediately rushed in, and finding the lady in the hall, they seized, and were going to carry her off: the lady, however, defended herself as well as she could, crying out very much, as did also the maid. Minghino perceiving this, ran thither with his party, and seeing them bear her away, they drew their swords and called out aloud, "Traitors, ye are all dead men; it shall never be so. What violence is this?" And with these words fell pell-mell upon them. The neighbourhood also was soon up in arms, and blaming those proceedings, joined with Minghino. Therefore, after a long skirmish, Minghino took the lady from Giannole, and brought her back to Giacomo's house. Nor was the fray at an end till the city officers came and seized many of the persons concerned, and amongst the rest Minghino, Giannole, and Crivello, and carried them to prison. As soon as things were a little quieted, and Giacomo returned, he became very uneasy at what had happened, till hearing that she was not in fault, he was better satisfied, but resolved, for fear of the like accidents hereafter, to marry her as soon as possible. In the morning, the parents of them both, having heard the truth of the story, and being sensible of the evil which might ensue to both the young gentlemen, who were in custody, should Giacomo proceed rigorously against them, they came therefore to him, and entreated him gently not to regard so much the injury which he had received from the little discretion of the young men, as the esteem and friendship which, they hoped, he bore towards themselves, who now requested this favour at his hands; submitting themselves, and the youths also, who had committed the offence, to make any satisfaction he should insist upon Giacomo, who had seen much of the world, and was a person of understanding, answered in few words, "Gentlemen, were I in my own country, as I am

now in yours, I hold myself so much your friend, that I should do this or anything else to oblige you; but in this respect I am the more ready to do it, as the offence is now committed against yourselves. For this lady is not, as many may think, either of Cremona or Pavia, but of Fænza; although neither myself, nor she, nor yet the person who bequeathed her to me, knew whose daughter she was; everything then shall be done according to your desire." The honest men hearing that she was of Fænza, began to wonder; and after thanking him for his gracious reply, they desired he would be so kind as to tell them in what manner she came into his hands, and how he knew that she was of Fænza. He replied, "Guidotto da Cremona was my very good friend and companion, and as he lay upon his death-bed, he told me, that when this city was taken by the Emperor Frederick, and given to be pillaged by the soldiers, he and some others went into a house full of rich booty, which was forsaken by the owners; only this girl, who seemed then but two years old, was left behind; and she seeing him go upstairs, called papa; for which reason he took pity on her, and brought her away, with everything that was of value in the house, to Fano; when dying there, he left her in charge to me, desiring when she should be of age, that I would marry her, and give what was her own, by way of fortune; since, therefore, she has been grown up, I have met with nobody that I thought a fit match for her, otherwise I would willingly dispose of her, lest the like accident should happen again that befell us last night." At this time there was present one Gulielmino da Medicina, who was with Guidotto in that expedition, and knew very well whose house it was that he had plundered, and seeing that person in the company, he accosted him, and said, "Bernarbuccio, do you hear what Giacomo has been talking of?"—"Yes", he replied,

"and I am now thinking about it; for in that confusion I remember to have lost a daughter about the same age that he speaks of."—"Then", said Gulielmino, "it is certainly the same, for I was there at that time, and heard Guidotto relate how he plundered such a house, when I knew it must be yours; see therefore if you can call to mind any mark that she had, whereby you may know her, for she is plainly your daughter." He then remembered that she had a scar like a cross under her left ear, and he desired Giacomino to shew him to his house, that he might convince himself by seeing her. Accordingly, he brought him thither very willingly, when the very first sight of her put him in mind of her mother; but, not regarding that, he told Giacomino that he should take it as a favour if he might turn aside the hair from her left ear; which being permitted, he found the same mark, and was convinced that she was his daughter: he then said to Giacomino, "Brother, this is my daughter; it was my house that Guidotto pillaged, when this child was forgotten by her mother, in our great hurry, and we supposed that she was burnt along with the house." The lady hearing this, and seeing him to be a person of gravity, moved also perhaps by a secret instinct, easily gave credit to it, and both of them burst into tears. Bernarbuccio then sent for her mother and her other relations, as also her sisters and brethren, when, relating what had happened, he carried her home, to the great joy of them all, as well as satisfaction of Giacomino. Whilst the governor of the city, who was a worthy man, knowing that Giannole, whom he had in custody, was son to Bernarbuccio, and the lady's own brother, resolved to overlook the crime he had committed. Conversing then with Bernarbuccio and Giacomino about it, he undertook to make peace between Giannole and Minghino, to whom, by the consent of all parties, he gave her to wife, and set

all the other people at liberty. Minghino then made a most sumptuous wedding, and carried his bride home in great state, where they lived happily together for a long course of years.

NOVEL VI

Gianni di Procida is discovered with a young lady, formerly his mistress, but then given to King Frederick, for which he is condemned to be burnt with her at a stake. When, being known by Ruggieri dell' Oria, he escapes, and marries her.

NEIPHILE'S agreeable novel being ended, Pampinea received an order to proceed, and quickly raising her lovely countenance, she thus began:—

Great, most gracious ladies, is the force of love, which often leads people to rash and perilous attempts, as you have heard set forth in divers instances, both now and heretofore, and which I shall further evince in what I am going to relate concerning an enamoured youth, as follows. Ischia is an island near Naples, in which lived a beautiful young lady named Restituta, daughter to a certain gentleman called Marin Bolgaro, with whom was in love a young gentleman of Procida, called Gianni, and she had the same affections for him. Now not a day passed but he would go to Ischia to see her, and frequently in the night; if he could not get a boat, he would swim over, though it was only to please himself with the sight of her house. Whilst his love continued then so extremely fervent, it chanced that she was walking out one summer's day on the sea-shore, and passing from one rock to another picking up shells, when she came near a grotto, where some young Sicilians, just come from Naples, were assembled together, partly for the sake of the shade, and partly for the fresh water, of which there was a cool and pleasant

spring; they seeing her by herself, and she perceiving nothing of them, agreed together to seize and carry her away. They consequently surprised and took her to their ship, though she made a great outcry, and sailed off with her. Being arrived at Calabria, a dispute arose amongst them, whom she should belong to; when coming to no agreement about her, it was at last thought convenient, to remove all cause of dissension, by making a present of her to Frederick, king of Naples, who was young and addicted to his pleasures. Accordingly they found that prince mightily pleased with her; but, being a little indisposed at that time, he had her sent to a pleasant seat built in one of his gardens called La Cuba, to be kept there for his purpose. The lady's being stolen made a great noise all over Ischia, and so much the more as the persons concerned were unknown. But Gianni, who was more particularly interested in the affair, never expecting to hear any tidings of her there, and understanding which way the vessel had steered, got another ready and went all along the sea-coast, from Minerva to Scalea, in Calabria, to inquire after her; and at this last place he was told, that she was carried by some Sicilian sailors to Palermo. Thither then he went, with all possible speed, when, after much inquiry, he found that she was presented to the king, and kept for his purpose in La Cuba; which gave him infinite concern, and he began to despair, not only of getting her back, but even of ever seeing her more; but yet being detained by his love, he sent his frigate home, and resolved to stay there, as nobody knew him; when passing pretty often in sight of the house, they chanced one day to spy one another through the window, to the great satisfaction of both. And he, seeing the place was private, got near enough to speak to her, and being instructed by her what course to take if he desired to have a nearer interview, he left her

for that time, taking particular notice, first, of the situation of the place; and waiting for night, when a good part of that was spent, he returned, and clambering over the walls, which seemed inaccessible, he made his way into the garden, where finding a long piece of timber, he set it against the window, and by the help of it got into the chamber. The lady, reflecting that she had lost her honour, of which she had before been very tenacious, supposing, also, that she could bestow her favours on none who deserved them better, was the less scrupulous in this affair, and had left the casement open on purpose for him. She now begged earnestly of him that he would contrive some method to get her from thence, and he promised to order every thing so that the next time he came he would take her away. This being agreed, he went and lay down on the bed by her. In the meantime the king being much smitten with her beauty, and finding himself recovered, had a mind, though it was far in the night, to go and spend some time with her. Coming, therefore, with a few servants, to the house, and going softly to the chamber where he knew she was, to his great surprise he saw Gianni and her asleep together. This provoked him to that degree, that he was on the point of putting both to death: till reflecting that it would be base in any person, and more so in a king, to kill people unarmed and asleep, he held his hand, but resolved to make a public example of them, and to burn them alive. Then turning to one of his company, he said, "What do you think of this base woman, on whom I had fixed all my hopes?" He afterwards inquired if they knew the man who had the assurance to come there to commit such an outrage. The person replied, that he did not remember ever to have seen him before. The king upon this went away greatly disturbed, commanding that as soon as it was light they

should be brought bound to Palermo, when they were to be tied back to back, and kept there till three o'clock, for everybody to see them, and then to be burned as they deserved. Accordingly they were seized and bound without the least remorse or pity; and being brought, as the king had ordered, to Palermo, they were tied to a stake in the great square, and the fire and faggots were ready to burn them at the time appointed: whilst all the people of the city flocked to see the sight, the women greatly pitying and commanding the man; the men also shewed the same regard for the poor woman, every one highly admiring her most extraordinary beauty. But the two lovers stood with their eyes fixed on the ground, lamenting their hard fate, and waiting every moment for their sentence to be put in execution. Whilst they were kept in this manner till the time fixed upon, the news was carried to Ruggieri dell' Oria, a person of great worth and valour, who was the king's high admiral; and he coming to the place, cast his eyes first upon the lady and praised her beauty very much. He then turned to Gianni, when he soon called him to mind, and asked him if he was not Gianni di Procida. Gianni lifted up his eyes, and remembering the admiral, he said, "I was once that person; but now I am to be so no more." The admiral then inquired what it was had brought him to this. Gianni replied, "Love and the king's displeasure." The admiral made him tell the whole story, and as he was going away, Gianni called him back, and said, "My lord, if it be possible, pray obtain one favour of his majesty for me." Ruggieri asked what that was. Gianni made answer, "I find that I am to die without delay; therefore I only beg that, as I am tied with my back to this lady, whom I have loved dearer than my own life, and am not able to see her, that we may be bound with our faces to each other, and so I

may expire with the pleasure of looking upon her. Ruggieri laughed, and said, "I will take care that you ed those who had the care of the execution to respite it shall see her to much better purpose." And he command- till further orders, and he went directly to the king. Finding him a good deal out of temper, he spared not to speak his mind to this effect:—

"My liege, what have these two young people done to offend you, whom you have now ordered to be burnt?" The king told him. He then added, "Their crime may deserve it, but not from you: and as misdeeds require punishment, so benefits are worthy of rewards, as well as thanks and mercy. Do you know who they are whom you have sentenced to be burnt?" The king answered, "No." "Then," said he, "I will tell you that you may see how wisely you suffer yourself to be transported with passion. The young man is son to Landolpho, brother to Gianni di Procida, by whose means you are lord of that island. The lady is daughter to Marin Bolgaro, whose influence it was that secured your dominion over Ischia. Besides, they have had a long regard and love for each other; and it was this, and no disrespect to you that put them upon committing the crime, if it may be called such, for which you are going to make them suffer death, but for which you ought rather give them some noble reward." The king hearing this, and being assured that the admiral spoke nothing but the truth, not only put a stop to the proceedings, but was grieved for what he had done: he therefore ordered that they should be set at liberty, and brought before him. Then hearing their whole case, he resolved to make them amends for the injury they had received, and giving them noble apparel and many royal presents, he had them married, as it was their mutual desire, and afterwards sent them home, thoroughly

satisfied with their good fortune which they long happily enjoyed together.

NOVEL VII

Theodoro is in love with Violante, his master's daughter: She proves with child, for which he is condemned to be hanged; when being led out to execution, he is known by his father, set at liberty, and afterwards marries her.

THE ladies were some time in suspense, through fear lest the two lovers should be burnt; but were mightily pleased at last to hear of their deliverance: when the queen gave the next command to Lauretta, who cheerfully took up the thread as follows:—

When good King William ruled over Sicily, there lived in that island a gentleman named Amerigo, abbot of Trapani, who, amongst his other temporal goods, was well stored with children; and having occasion for servants, and meeting with some Genoese pirates from the Levant, who had been coasting along Armenia, and taken several children, supposing them to be Turks, he bought some, in appearance chiefly peasants; and, amongst the rest, one of a more generous aspect, called Theodoro; who, as he grew up, though he was treated as a servant, was educated with Amerigo's own children; when his natural disposition was so good and agreeable to his master, that he had him baptized and called him Pietro, making him overseer of all his affairs. Amongst Amerigo's other children was a daughter, named Violante, a most beautiful young lady, who, having been kept from marrying longer than was agreeable to her, cast her eye at last upon Pietro, being charmed with his behaviour, though she was ashamed to make such a discovery. But love spared her this trouble; for he, by often looking

cautiously at her, was so far captivated, that he was always uneasy unless he saw her: at the same time he was fearful lest any one should perceive it, as thinking it a sort of crime. This she soon took notice of; and, to give him a little more assurance, let him understand that it was not displeasing to her. Thus they went on together, neither venturing to speak to the other, though it was what they both desired. But whilst they thus mutually languished, fortune, as if purposely, found means to banish this bashfulness, which had hitherto been in the way. Amerigo had a country house about a mile from Trapani, whither his wife and daughter, together with other ladies, used to go sometimes, by way of pastime; and being there one day, having taken Pietro along with them, it happened that the day was overcast all at once with clouds, on which account the lady and her friends made all possible haste home again, for fear they should be taken in the storm. But Pietro and the young lady, being more nimble than the rest, had got considerably the start of them, as much perhaps through love as fear of the weather, and being out of sight, there came such claps of thunder, attended with a violent storm of hail, that the mother and her company were glad to get into a labourer's house, whilst Pietro and the young lady, having no other place of refuge, went into an old uninhabited cottage, which had just cover enough remaining to keep them dry; and here they were obliged to stand pretty close together. This encouraged him to open his heart, and he said, "Would to Heaven the storm would never cease, that I might continue here always in this manner!"—"I should like it," she replied, "well enough." These words brought on some little acts of fondness, which were followed by others so far that at last they grew very familiar together. The shower being

over, they went on towards the city, waiting by the way for the mother, who having joined them, they came with her home. They had frequent meetings from that time, conducted always with the greatest secrecy; till at length she proved with child, which terribly alarmed them both. On this Pietro, being in fear of his own life, resolved to fly, and told her so. She replied, "If you do that, I will certainly murder myself." Pietro, then, who loved her most affectionately, said, "Why would you have me stay? There must soon be a discovery, when for your part you will be easily forgiven, and I forced to bear the punishment of both." She made answer, "Pietro, my crime must be known; but as for yours, be assured unless you tell it yourself, it never shall."—"Then," quoth he, "if you promise me that, I will stay; but be sure you observe it." The young lady who had concealed as long as possible her being with child, finding it could be kept a secret no longer, let her mother at last into the truth, entreating her protection with abundance of tears. The mother was very harsh with her, and insisting upon knowing how it happened: when she, to keep her word with Pietro, feigned a long story about it, to which the other easily gave credit, and, to keep it private, sent her away to one of their farm-houses. When the time of her labour was at hand, the mother, never suspecting any thing of her husband's coming, it chanced that Amerigo, returning from hawking, thought, as he passed under the window, that he heard something of a noise and bustle above stairs when he came in, and inquired what the matter was. The lady seeing her husband, told him, with a great deal of concern what had happened to their daughter. But he, not quite so credulous as herself, said it was impossible that she should be with child and not know by whom, and he insisted upon knowing it: by

that means she might regain his favour, otherwise he would put her to death without the least mercy. The lady tried all she could to make him satisfied with that story, but to no purpose. He ran to his daughter with his drawn sword (who, whilst they had been in discourse together, had brought forth a boy), and said, "Either declare the father, or thou shalt die instantly." She, terrified to death, broke her promise to Pietro, and made a full discovery. He was so enraged at this, that he could scarcely forbear murdering her, till having vented something of his passion, he mounted his horse again, and returned to Trapani; when making his complaint to one Signor Currado, who was governor there for the king, of the injury Pietro had done him, he had him apprehended, and he confessed the whole affair. Being condemned to be whipped and afterwards hanged; that the same hour might put an end to the lives of both the lovers and the child, Amerigo, whose anger was not appeased with Pietro's death, sent a cup of poison and a naked sword by one of his servants to his daughter, saying, "Go carry these two things to Violante, and tell her from me that she must take her choice, whether to die by poison or by the sword; and if she refuse, I will have her burnt publicly as she deserves: when you have done this, take her child and dash its brains out, and then throw them to the dogs." The fellow, more disposed to such wickedness than any thing that was good, went readily enough about his errand. Now Pietro was whipped, and as he was led along to the gallows, he chanced to pass by an inn, where lodged three noblemen of Armenia, who were sent as ambassadors by their king to the pope, to treat of some weighty affairs with regard to an expedition he was going to make. There they stayed to repose themselves after their journey and had

great honour showed them by the nobility of Trapani, and especially by Amerigo. Observing the people pass by who were leading Pietro, they went to the window to see what was the matter. Pietro stood stripped to the waist, with his hands tied behind him; when one of the ambassadors, named Phineo, an ancient person, and one of great authority, looking at him, saw a red spot on his breast, which children sometimes are born with, and immediately was put in mind of a son that had been stolen from him by some pirates fifteen years before, of whom he could never since learn any tidings; and considering by Pietro's looks that he must be about the same age, he began to suspect by the mark, that he was the very person, and if so he supposed he would remember his own name and his father's, as also something of the Armenian language; there, being near him, he called out "O Theodoro!" Hearing that, Pietro lifted up his head. Phineo then spoke to him in the Armenian language, saying, "Whence do you come, and whose son are you?" The officers now who led him stopped, out of regard to the worthy person's character, when Pietro replied, "I am of Armenia, the son of one Phineo, and was brought hither by I know not whom."

Phineo was now convinced that he was his son, and he came down with his friends full of tears, and ran to embrace him among all the officers; when throwing a rich mantle over his shoulders, he desired the person who led him to wait till orders should come to take him back; which the other replied he should do very willingly. Phineo had learned the cause of his sentence, as fame had noised it everywhere, when, taking his friends with him and their retinue, he went to Currado, and said, "Sir, the person whom you have condemned is no slave, he is a freeman and my son: he is ready also to marry the

woman; then please to defer the execution till it be known whether she be willing to have him, that nothing be done contrary to law." Currado was greatly surprised, hearing that he was Phineo's son, and being ashamed of their mistake, confessed that what he required was reasonable. He then sent for Amerigo, and acquainted him with these things. Amerigo was under great concern lest his daughter and her child should be put to death before that time knowing if she was alive everything might be fairly accommodated: therefore he sent in all haste to her, to prevent his orders being obeyed, if they were not already performed. The messenger found the servant, who had carried the sword and poison standing before her, and as she was in no haste to make her choice, he was abusing her, and would have forced her to have taken one. But hearing his master's command, he returned and told him how it was, at which he was thoroughly satisfied, and went to Phineo to beg his pardon for what he had done, declaring that if Theodoro would marry his daughter he should be perfectly contented.

Phineo accepted his apology, and assured him, that he should either marry her, or else the law should take its course. This being agreed, they went to Theodoro (who, though rejoiced to find his father, was yet under apprehensions of dying), and asked him if he consented. Theodoro, hearing that he had it in his choice to marry his Violante was as much rejoiced as if he had gone directly from hell to heaven, and replied that he should esteem it as the greatest favour in the world. They sent to know her mind in the case, who, hearing of what had happened to Theodoro, began to receive a little comfort after all her affliction, and she said nothing in the world could be more pleasing to her than to be the wife of Theodoro; but yet she should always wait her father's

commands. Every thing being thus settled, the wedding was celebrated to the great joy of the whole city. In a little time the bride began to recover her looks, and having taken care of the infant, she went to pay her respects to Phineo, who, being returned from his embassy, received her as his daughter, with the utmost joy and respect. Soon after they embarked altogether for Laiazzo, where the two lovers lived peaceably and happily together all their lives.

NOVEL VIII

Anastasio being in love with a young lady, spent a good part of his fortune without being able to gain her affections. At the request of his relations he retires to Chiassi, where he sees a lady pursued and slain by a gentleman, and then given to the dogs to be devoured. He invites his friends, along with his mistress, to come and dine with him; when they see the same thing, and she, fearing the like punishment, takes him for her husband.

WHEN Lauretta had made an end, Philomena began, by the queen's command thus:—

Most gracious ladies, as pity is a commendable quality in us, in like manner do we find cruelty most severely punished by Divine Justice; which, that I may make plain to you all, and afford means to drive it from your hearts, I mean to relate a novel as full of compassion as it is agreeable.

In Ravenna, an ancient city of Romagna, dwelt formerly many persons of quality; amongst the rest was a young gentleman, named Anastasio de gli Honesti, who, by the deaths of his father and uncle, was left immensely rich; and, being a bachelor, fell in love with one of the daughters of Signor Paolo Traversaro (of a family much superior to his own), and was in hopes, by his constant

application, to gain her affection: but though his endeavours were generous, noble, and praiseworthy, so far were they from succeeding, that, on the contrary, they rather turned out to his disadvantage; and so cruel, and even savage was the beloved fair one (either her singular beauty or noble descent having made her thus haughty and scornful), that neither he nor anything that he did could ever please her. This so afflicted Anastasio, that he was going to lay violent hands upon himself: but, thinking better of it, he frequently thought to leave her entirely; or else to hate her, if he could, as much as she had hated him. But this proved a vain design; for he constantly found that the less his hope, the greater always his love. Persevering then in his love and extravagant way of life, his friends looked upon him as destroying his constitution, as well as wasting his substance; they therefore advised and entreated that he would leave the place, and go and live somewhere else; for, [•]by that means, he might lessen both his love and expense. For some time he made light of this advice, till being very much importuned, and not knowing how to refuse them, he promised to do so; when, making extraordinary preparations as if he was going some long journey either into France or Spain, he mounted his horse, and left Ravenna, attended by many of his friends, and went to a place about three miles off, called Chiassi, where he ordered tents and pavillions to be brought, telling those who had accompanied him that he meant to stay there, but that they might return to Ravenna. Here he lived in the most splendid manner, inviting sometimes this company, and sometimes that, both to dine and sup, as he had used to do before. Now it happened in the beginning of May, the season being extremely pleasant, that, thinking of his cruel mistress, he ordered all his

family to retire, and leave him to his own thoughts, when he walked along, step by step, and lost in reflection, till he came to a forest of pines. It being then the fifth hour of the day, and he advanced more than half a mile into the grove, without thinking either of his dinner or anything else but his love; on a sudden he seemed to hear a most grievous lamentation, with the loud shrieks of a woman; this put an end to his meditation, when looking round him, to know what the matter was, he saw come out of a thicket full of briars and thorns, and run towards the place where he was, a most beautiful lady, naked, with her flesh all scratched and rent by the bushes, crying terribly, and begging for mercy: in close pursuit of her were two fierce mastiffs, biting and tearing wherever they could lay hold, and behind upon a black steed, rode a gloomy knight, with a dagger in his hand, loading her with the bitterest imprecations. The sight struck him at once with wonder and consternation, as well as pity for the lady, whom he was desirous to rescue from such trouble and danger, if possible: but finding himself without arms, he seized the branch of a tree, instead of truncheon, and went forward with it, to oppose both the dogs and the knight. The knight observing this, called out, afar off, "Anastasio, do not concern thyself; but leave the dogs and me to do by this wicked woman as she has deserved." At these words the dogs laid hold of her, and he coming up to them, dismounted from his horse. Anastasio then stepped up to him and said, "I know not who you are, that are acquainted thus with me; but I must tell you, that it is a most villainous action for a man armed as you are to pursue a naked woman, and to set dogs upon her also, as if she were a wild beast; be assured that I shall defend her to the utmost of my power." The knight replied, "I was once your

countryman, when you were but a child, and was called Guido de gli Anastagi, at which time I was more enamoured with this woman than ever you were with Traversaro's daughter; but she treated me so cruelly, and with so much insolence, that I killed myself with this dagger which you now see in my hand, for which I am doomed to eternal punishment. Soon afterwards she, who was over and above rejoiced at my death, died likewise, and for that cruelty, as also for the joy which she expressed at my misery, she is condemned as well as myself. Our sentences are for her to flee before me; and for me, who loved her so well, to pursue her as a mortal enemy; and when I overtake her with this dagger, with which I murdered myself, do I murder her; then I open her through the back and take out that hard and cold heart, which neither love nor pity could pierce, with all her entrails, and throw them to the dogs; and in a little time (so wills the justice and power of Heaven) she rises, as though she had never been dead, and renews her miserable flight, whilst we pursue her over again. Every Friday in the year, about this time, do I sacrifice her here, as you see, and on other days in other places, where she has ever thought or done anything against me: and thus being from a lover become her mortal enemy, I am to follow her as many years as she was cruel to me months. Then let the Divine Justice take its course, nor offer to oppose what you are no way able to withstand."

Anastasio drew back at these words, terrified to death, and waited to see what the other was going to do: who, having made an end of speaking, ran at her with the utmost fury, as she was seized by the dogs, and kneeled down begging for mercy, when with his dagger he pierced through her breast, drawing forth her heart and entrails, which the dogs immediately, as if half famished,

devoured. And in a little time she arose again as if nothing had happened, and fled towards the sea, the dogs biting and tearing her all the way; the knight also being remounted, and taking his dagger pursued her as before, till they soon got out of sight. Upon seeing these things, Anastasio stood divided betwixt fear and pity, and at length it came into his mind that, as it happened always on a Friday, it might be of particular use. Returning then to his servants, he sent for some of his friends and relations, when he said to them, "You have often importuned me to leave off loving this enemy, and to contract my expenses; I am ready to do so, provided you grant me one favour, which is this that next Friday, you engage Paolo Traversaro, his wife and daughter, with all their women friends and relations, to come and dine with me: the reason of my requiring this you will see at that time." This seemed to them a small matter and returning to Ravenna they invited all those whom he had desired, and though they found it difficult to prevail upon the young lady, yet the others carried her at last along with them.

Anastasio had provided a magnificent entertainment in the grove where that spectacle had lately been; and, having seated all his company, he contrived that the lady should sit directly opposite to the scene of action. The last course then was no sooner served up, but the lady's shrieks began to be heard. This surprised them all, and they began to inquire what it was, and, as nobody could inform them, they all arose; when immediately they saw the lady, dogs, and knight, who were soon amongst them. Great was consequently the clamour, both against the dogs and knight, and many of them went to her assistance. But the knight made the same harangue to them that he had done to Anastasio, which terrified and filled their

with wonder; whilst he acted the same part over again, the ladies, of whom there were many present, related to both the knight and lady who remembered his love and unhappy death, all lamenting as much as if it had happened to themselves. This tragical affair being ended, and the lady and knight both gone away, they had various arguments together about it; but none seemed so much affected as Anastasio's mistress, who had heard and seen everything distinctly, and was sensible that it concerned her more than any other person, calling to mind her usage of and cruelty towards him; so that she seemed to flee before him all incensed, with the mastiffs at her heels; and her terror was such, lest this should ever happen to her, that, turning her hatred into love, she sent that very evening a trusty damsels privately to him, who entreated him in her name to come to see her, for that she was ready to fulfil his desires. Anastasio replied, that nothing could be more agreeable to him, but that he desired no favour from her but what was consistent with her honour. The lady, who was sensible that it had been always her fault they were not married, answered, that she was willing; and going herself to her father and mother, she acquainted them with her intention. This gave them the utmost satisfaction; and the next Sunday the marriage was solemnized with all possible demonstrations of joy. And that spectacle was not attended with this good alone; but all the women of Ravenna, for the time to come, were so terrified with it, that they were more ready to listen to, and oblige the men, than ever they had been before.

NOVEL IX

Federigo being in love, without meeting with any return, spends all his substance, having nothing left but one poor hawk, which he gives to

his lady for her dinner when she comes to his house : she, knowing this, changes her resolutions, and marries him, by which means he becomes very rich.

THE queen now observing that only herself and Dioneus were left to speak, said pleasantly to this effect:—

As it is now come to my turn, I shall give you a novel something like the preceding one, that you may not only know what influence the power of your charms has over a generous heart, but that you may learn likewise to bestow your favours of your own accord, and where you think most proper, without suffering Fortune to be your directress, who disposes blindly, and without the least judgment whatsoever.

You must understand, then, that Coppo di Borghese (who was a person of great respect and authority among us, and whose amiable qualities, joined to his noble birth, had rendered him worthy of immortal fame) in the decline of life, used to divert himself among his neighbours and acquaintances, by relating things which had happened in his days, and which he knew how to do with more exactness and elegance of expression than any other person: he, I say, amongst other pleasant stories, used to tell us that at Florence dwelt a young gentleman named Federigo, son of Filippo Alberighi, who, in feats of arms and gentility, surpassed all the youth in Tuscany: this gentleman was in love with a lady called Madame Giovanna, one of the most agreeable women in Florence, and to gain her affection, used to be continually making tilts, balls, and such diversions; lavishing away his money in rich presents and everything that was extravagant. But she, as just and reputable as she was fair, made no account either of what he did for her sake or of himself. Living in this manner, his wealth soon began to waste, till at last he had nothing left but a very small farm, the income

of which was a most slender maintenance, and a single hawk, one of the best in the world. Yet loving still more than ever, and finding he could subsist no longer in the city in the manner he would choose to live, he retired to his farm, where he went out a fowling as often as the weather would permit, and bore his distress patiently, and without ever making his necessity known to anybody. Now, one day it happened, that, as he was reduced to the last extremity, the husband to this lady chanced to fall sick, who, being very rich, left all his substance to an only son who was almost grown up, and if he should die without issue, he then ordered that it should revert to his lady, whom he was extremely fond of; and when he had disposed thus of his fortune, he died. She now, being left a widow, retired, as our ladies usually do during the summer season, to a house of hers in the country, near to that of Federigo: whence it happened that her son soon became acquainted with him, and they used to divert themselves together with dogs and hawks; when he, having often seen Federigo's hawk fly, and being strangely taken with it, was desirous of having it, though the other valued it to that degree, that he knew not how to ask for it. This being so, the young spark soon fell sick, which gave his mother great concern, as he was her only child: and she ceased not to attend on and comfort him, often requesting, if there was any particular thing which he fancied, to let her know it, and promising to procure it for him if it were possible. The young gentleman, after many offers of this kind, at last said, "Madam, if you could contrive for me to have Federigo's hawk, I should soon be well." She was in some suspense at this, ~~and~~ began to consider how best to act. She knew that Federigo had long entertained a liking for her, without the least encouragement on her part; therefore she said

to herself, "How can I send or go to ask for this hawk, which I hear is the very best of the kind, and what alone maintains him in the world? Or how can I offer to take away from a gentleman all the pleasure that he has in life?" Being in this perplexity, though she was very sure of having it for a word she stood without making any reply, till at last the love of her son so far prevailed, that she resolved at all events to make him easy, and not send, but go herself, to bring it. She then replied, "Son, set your heart at rest, and think only of your recovery, for I promise you that I will go to-morrow for it the first thing I do." This afforded him such joy, that he immediately shewed signs of amendment. The next morning she went, by way of a walk, with another lady in company, to his little cottage to inquire for him. At that time, as it was too early to go out upon his diversion, he was at work in his garden. Hearing, therefore, that his mistress inquired for him at the door, he ran thither, surprised and full of joy; whilst she, with a great deal of complaisance, went to meet him; and after the usual compliments, she said, "Good morning to you, sir; I am come to make you some amends for what you have formerly done on my account; what I mean is that I have brought a companion to take a neighbourly dinner with you to-day." He replied, with a great deal of humility, "Madam, I do not remember ever to have received any harm by your means, but rather so much good, that if I was worth anything at any time, it was due to your singular merit, and the love I had for you: and most assuredly this courteous visit is more welcome to me than if I had all that I have wasted returned to me to spend over again; but you are come to a very poor host." With these words he shewed her into his house, seeming much out of countenance, and from thence they went

into the garden, when, having no company for her, he said, "Madam, as I have nobody else, please to admit this honest woman, a labourer's wife, to be with you, whilst I set forth the table." He, although his poverty was extreme, was never so sensible of his having been extravagant as now; but finding nothing to entertain the lady with, for whose sake he had treated thousands, he was in the utmost perplexity, cursing his evil fortune, and running up and down like one out of his wits; at length, having neither money nor anything he could pawn, and being willing to give her something, at the same time that he would not make his case known, even so much as to his own labourer, he espied his hawk upon the perch, which he seized, and finding it very fat judged it might make a dish not unworthy of such a lady. Without farther thought, then, he pulled his head off, and gave him to a girl to truss and roast carefully, whilst he laid the cloth, having a small quantity of linen yet ~~left~~; and then he returned, with a smile on his countenance, into the garden to her, telling her that what little dinner he was able to provide was now ready. She and her friend, therefore, entered and sat down with him, he serving them all the time with great respect, when they eat the hawk. After the dinner was over, and they had sat chattering a little together, she thought it a fit time to tell her errand, and she spoke to him courteously in this manner:—

"Sir, if you call to mind your past life, and my resolution which perhaps you may call cruelty, I doubt not but you will wonder at my presumption, when you know what I am come for; but if you had children of ~~your~~ own, to know how strong our natural affection is towards them, I am very sure you would excuse me. Now, my having a son forces me, against my own

inclinations, and all reason whatsoever, to request a thing of you, which I know you value extremely, as you have no other comfort or diversion left in your small circumstances; I mean your hawk, which he has taken such a fancy to, that unless I bring him back with me, I very much fear that he will die of his disorder. Therefore I entreat you, not for any regard you have for me (for in that respect you are no way obliged to me), but for that generosity with which you have always distinguished yourself that you would please to let me have him, by which means you will save my child's life, and lay him under perpetual obligations." Federigo, hearing the lady's request, and knowing it was out of his power to serve her, began to weep before he was able to make a word of reply. This she first thought was his great concern to part with his favourite bird, and that he was going to give her a flat denial; but after she had waited a little for his answer, he said, "Madam, ever since I have fixed my affections upon you, fortune has still been contrary to me in many things; but all the rest is nothing to what has now come to pass. You are here to visit me in this my poor mansion, and whither in my prosperity you would never deign to come; you also entreat a small present from me, which it is no way in my power to give, as I am going briefly to tell you. As soon as I was acquainted with the great favour you designed me, I thought it proper, considering your superior merit and excellency, to treat you, according to my ability, with something more nice and valuable than is usually given to other persons, when, calling to mind my hawk, which you now request, and his goodness, I judged him a fit repast for you, and you have had him roasted. Nor could I have thought him better bestowed, had you not now desired at him in a different manner, which is such a grief to me; m

that I shall never be at peace as long as I live;" and upon saying this, he produced his feathers, feet and talons. She began now to blame him for killing such a bird to entertain any woman with; secretly praising the greatness of his soul, which poverty had no power to abase. Thus, having no farther hopes of obtaining the hawk, she thanked him for the respect and good will he had shewed towards her, and returned full of concern to her son; who, either out of grief for the disappointment, or through the violence of his disorder, died in a few days. She continued sorrowful for some time; but, being left rich and young, her brothers were very pressing with her to marry again, which, though against her inclinations, yet finding them still importunate, and remembering Federigo's great worth, and the late instance of his generosity, in killing such a bird for her entertainment, she said, "I should rather choose to continue as I am; but since it is your desire that I take a husband, I will have only Federigo de gli Alberighi." They smiled contemptuously at this, and said, "You simple woman! what are you talking of? He is not worth one farthing in the world." She replied, "I believe it, brothers, to be as you say: but know, *that I would sooner have a man that stands in need of riches, than riches without a man.*" They hearing her resolution, and well knowing his generous temper, gave her to him with all her wealth; and he, seeing himself possessed of a lady whom he had so dearly loved, and such a vast fortune, lived in all true happiness with her, and was a better manager of his affairs for the time to come.

NOVEL X

Pietro di Vinciolo goes to sup at a friend's house; his wife in the meantime has her gallant: Pietro returns, when she hides him

under a chicken coop. Pietro relates, that a young fellow was found in Hercolano's house where he supped, who had been concealed by his wife. Pietro's wife blames very much the wife of Hercolano; whilst an ass happening to tread on the young man's fingers, who lay hidden, he cries out. Pietro runs to see what is the matter, and finds out the trick. At length they make it up.

THE queen had now made an end, and every one was pleased with Federigo's good fortune, when Dioneus thus began:—

I know not whether I should term it a vice accidental, and owing to the depravity of our manners, or whether it be not rather a natural infirmity, to laugh sooner at bad things than those which are good especially when they no way concern ourselves. Therefore, as the pains which I have before taken, and am also now to undergo, aim at no other end but to drive away melancholy and to afford matter for mirth and laughter, although some part of the following novel be not altogether so modest, yet, as it may make you merry, I shall venture to relate it; whilst you may do in this case, as when you walk in a garden, that is, pick the roses and leave the briars behind you. So you may leave the sorry fellow to his own reflections, and laugh at the amorous wiles of his wife, having that regard for other people's misfortunes which they deserve.

There dwelt not long since in Perugia, a very rich man, named Pietro di Vinciolo, who, perhaps more to lessen people's bad opinion of him than anything else, took unto him a wife. And fortune was conformable to his inclinations in this manner; namely, that he met with a woman of such a disposition, as required two husbands rather than one. Consequently, they had continual ~~jealousy~~ and animosities together, whilst she would often argue with herself in this way: "I made choice of this man,

and brought him a good fortune, expecting to live comfortably with him, and I now find it impossible. Had I not been disposed to be of the world, I would have shut myself up in a monastery at once. I shall have old age overtake me before I know one good day, and then it will be too late to expect it." Full of such reflections as these, she went at last, and made her case known to an old sanctified virgin (who was perpetually saying over her Pater Nosters, and would talk of nothing else but the lives of the holy fathers, and the wounds of St. Francis), and she replied, "Daughter, you think very rightly, there is no grief equal to that of having missed our opportunity, as I can very well bear you witness. It is not long that our bloom lasts, and we have it in our power to do for ourselves; afterwards, pray, what are we reckoned good for? If you want any assistance, I will do my best to serve you; but you must consider that I am very poor: I would have you therefore partake of all my pardons and Pater Nosters." It was then agreed that if the old woman should meet with a certain gentleman in the street, whom the other described to her, she then knew what she had to do; and upon this she gave her some victuals, and sent her away. The old wretch soon contrived to bring them together, and they had several meetings; one evening, in particular, the husband being engaged to sup with a friend of his, called Herculano, the lady and her gallant were no sooner seated at table, but Pietro was heard knocking at the door. She was frightened out of her wits, and being willing to hide him somewhere or other, and not knowing where to put him better, she covered him with the hen coop which stood in the next room, and throwing an empty sack over it, ran to open the door, saying, "Husband you have soon made an end of your supper." Pietro

replied, "I have not tasted one morsel." "How could that be?" quoth she. "I will tell you," rejoined he, "how it was. Hercolano, his wife, and myself, were all set down, when we heard some body sneeze; this we did not regard for once or twice, but it happening three or four or five times, it naturally surprised us; and Hercolano (who was disturbed that his wife made him wait sometime at the door, before she let him in) said, in a passion, "What is the meaning of this? Who is it that sneezes in this manner?" And getting up from the table, he went towards the stairs, under which was a cupboard, made to set things out of the way, and supposing that it came from thence, he opened the door, when there immediately issued out the greatest stench of sulphur that could be, though we perceived something of it before, and they had words about it; when she told him, that she had been whitening her veils with brimstone, and had set the pan, over which she had laid them to receive the steam, in that place, and she supposed it continued yet to smoke. After he had opened the door, and the smoke was a little dispersed, he began to look, about to see who it was that sneezed, the sulphur provoking to it; and though he continued sneezing, yet his breast was so straitened with it, that, in a very little time more, he would neither have done that, nor anything else. Hercolano, seeing the person at last, cried out, "So, madam! I now see why you made us wait so long at the door, but let me die if I do not pay you as you deserve." The wife, finding that she was discovered, rose from the table without making any excuse, and went I know not whither. Hercolano, not perceiving that his wife was fled, called upon the man that sneezed, and ordered him to come out; but he who was indeed not able, never offered to stir, notwithstanding all he could

say. Upon which he drew him to come out by the foot, and was running for a knife to kill him, but I, fearing to be drawn into some difficulty myself about it, would not suffer him to put him to death; but defended him, and called out for the neighbours to assist, who came and carried him away: this spoiled our supper, and I have not had one bit, as I told you." The lady hearing this account, saw that other women were of the same disposition with herself, although some proved more unlucky than others; and she would gladly have vindicated Hercolano's wife, but that she thought by blaming the faults of other people, to make the way more open for her own; she then began:—

"Here is a fine affair truly; this is your virtuous and good woman, who seemed so spiritually-minded always that I could have confessed myself to her upon occasion. What is worse, she is also old: she sets a fine example to young people! Cursed be the hour of her birth, and herself also; vile woman as she is! to be a disgrace to her whole sex; who, mindless of her own honour and her plighted faith to her husband, was not ashamed to injure so deserving a person, and who had been always so tender of her! As I hope for mercy I would have none on such prostitutes, they should every soul of them be burnt alive." Now calling to mind her own spark who was concealed, she began to fondle her husband, and would have had him go to bed; but he, who had more stomach to eat than sleep, asked whether she had anything for supper. "Yes, truly," quoth she, "we are used to have suppers when you are from home. I should fare better were I Hercolano's wife; my dear, ~~now~~ go to bed." That evening it happened that certain labourers of his were come with something out of the country, and had put their asses, without giving them

any water, into a stable adjoining to the little room, when one of them slipped his halter, being very thirsty, and went smelling everywhere to drink, till he came to the coop under which the young man was hidden. Now he was forced to lie flat on his belly, and one of his fingers, by strange ill-fortune, was uncovered, so that the ass trod upon it, which made him cry out most terribly. Pietro wondered to hear that clamour, supposing it was somewhere in the house, and finding the person continue to make a noise, the ass still squeezing close his finger, he called aloud, "Who is there?" and running to the coop and turning it up, he saw the young man, who, besides the great pain he had suffered, was frightened to death lest Pietro should do him some mischief. He enquired of him then what business he had there; to which he made no reply, but begged he would do him no harm. Pietro then said, "Get up, I shall not hurt you, only tell me how you came hither, and upon what account." The young man confessed everything, whilst Pietro, full as glad that he had found him as his wife was sorry, brought him into the room, where she sat in all the terror imaginable, expecting him. Seating himself now down before her, he said, "Here, you that were so outrageous at Herculano's wife, saying that she should be burnt, and that she was a scandal to you all, what do you say now for yourself? Or how could you have the assurance to utter such things with regard to her, when you knew yourself to be equally guilty? You are all alike, and think to cover your own transgressions by other people's mistakes; I wish a fire would come from heaven and consume you all together, for a perverse generation as you are." The lady, now seeing that he went no further than a few words, put a good face on the matter, and replied, "Yes, I make no doubt but you would have us

all destroyed; but I shall stick close to you yet. You do well to compare me to Herculano's wife, who is a deformed hypocritical old woman and he one of the best of husbands; whereas you know it is the reverse with regard to us two: I would sooner go in rags were you what you ought to be, than to have everything in plenty and you continue the same person you have always been." Pietro found she had matter enough to serve her the whole night, and having never been over fond of her, he said, "I will take care that you shall have more comfort for the time to come; do but see and get us something for supper, for I suppose this young spark is fasting as well as myself."—"Tis very true," she replied, "for we were going to sit down when you unluckily came to the door."—"Then go and get something," he said, "and we will have no more disputes." She, finding her husband was satisfied, went instantly about it, and they all three supped cheerfully together.

Dioncus having finished his novel, which was the less laughed at by the ladies, not for any want of mirth but on account of their modesty; and the queen knowing that there was an end of the novels of her day, arose, and taking the crown from her own head, placed it upon Eliza, saying, "Madam, now it is your business to command." Eliza, taking upon herself the honour, gave the same orders to the master of the household as had been done in the former reigns with regard to what was necessary during the administration; she then said, "We have often heard that many people by their ready wit and smart repartees, have not only blunted the keen satire of other persons but have also warded off some imminent ~~danger~~. Then, as the subject is agreeable enough and may be useful, I will that to-morrow's discourse be to that effect: namely, of such persons as have returned

some stroke of wit which was pointed at them, or else by some quick reply or prudent foresight have avoided either danger or derision." This was agreeable to the whole assembly, and the queen now gave them leave to depart till the hour for supper: at that time they were called together, and sat cheerfully down as usual. When supper was over, Emilia was ordered to begin a dance and Dioneus to sing. But he, attempting to sing what the queen disapproved, she said, with a good deal of warmth, "Dioneus, I will have none of this ribaldry; either sing us a song fit to be heard, or you shall see that I know how to resent it." At these words he put on a more serious countenance, and began the following:—

SONG

I

Cupid, the charms that crown my fair
Have made me slave to you and her.
The lightning of her eyes,
That darting through my bosom flies,
Doth still your sovereign power declare:
At your control
Each grace binds fast my vanquish'd soul.

II

Devoted to your throne
From henceforth I myself confess,
Nor can I guess
If my desires to her be known:
Who claims each wish, each thought so far,
That all my peace depends on her.

III

Then haste, kind godhead, and inspire
A portion of your sacred fire;
To make her feel
• That self-consuming zeal,
The cause of my decay,
That wastes my very heart away.

When Dioneus had made an end, the queen called for several other songs: his, nevertheless, was highly commended; afterwards great part of the evening being spent, and the heat of the day sufficiently damped by the breezes of the night, she ordered them all to go and repose themselves till the following day.

THE SIXTH DAY

THE moon had now lost her brightness in the midst of the heavens, and the world become illuminated by the appearance of the new day, when the queen arose with all her company, and they walked forth upon the dewy grass to some distance from that little eminence, holding various arguments by the way concerning their late novels, and making themselves merry with reciting some of the most entertaining over again: till at last, the heat growing excessive, as the sun was mounted to a greater height, they turned back, and came to the palace; where the tables being set forth against their return, and every part of the house bedecked with sweet-smelling flowers, they sat down to dinner. When that was over, and after singing a few songs, some went asleep and others played at chess; whilst Dioneus and Lauretta sang the song of Troilus and Cressida. At the usual hour they met by the fountain's side, when the queen laid her first commands upon Philomena, who readily began as follows:

NOVEL I

A certain knight offers a lady to carry her behind him, and to tell her a pleasant story by the way; but doing it with an ill grace, she chose rather to walk on foot.

Ladies, as stars are the ornaments of heaven, flowers of the spring, and as the hills are most beautiful when

planted with trees, so a smart and elegant turn of expression is the embellishment of discourse; and the shorter the better, especially in women. But true it is, whether it be owing to our unhappy dispositions or some particular enmity which the stars bear to our sex, there is hardly any among us that knows when it is proper to speak, or to understand what is said as we ought, which is a great disgrace to us all. But as Pampinea has before spoken to this point more largely, I shall say nothing farther; but only show, by the genteel manner of a lady's silencing a knight, the great beauty of a word or two spoken in due time and place.

You may all of you have heard that there lived in our city, not a great while ago, a lady of much worth and wit, whose good qualities deserve not that her name should be concealed; she was called then Madame Oretta, and was the wife of Signor Geri Spina; who being by chance in the country, as we are now, and going to take a walk along with some ladies and knights, who had dined at her house the day before, from one place to another; and their journey seeming a little tedious, as they were on foot, one of the knights, who happened to be on horseback, said that if she pleased he would carry her part of the way, and entertain her with one of the best stories in the world. "Sir," she replied, "I should be extremely obliged to you for it." The knight, who told a story with as ill a grace as he wore a sword, began his tale, which was really a good one; but by frequent repetitions, and beginning over again to say it better, by mistaking also one name for another and relating everything in the worst manner, he mangled it to that degree that he made the lady quite sick: and being able to bear it no longer, seeing him set fast, nor likely soon to extricate himself, she said pleasantly to him, "Sir, your horse has a very

uneasy trot, I beg you would set me down." The knight who took a hint more readily than he told a story, made a laugh of it, and turned his discourse to something else; leaving what he had sorrily began and worse conducted without offering to end it.

NOVEL II

Cisti the baker, by a smart reply, makes Signor Geri Spina sensible of an unreasonable request.

THE whole company was pleased with what Oretta had said; when the queen pointed next to Pampinea, who spoke thus:—

It is beyond my capacity to determine whether nature be more in fault, when she joins a generous soul to a homely person: or fortune in dooming a body, graced with a noble spirit, to a mean condition of life; as was the case of a citizen of ours, named Cisti, as well as of many others. For this man, though he had truly a great spirit, yet fortune made him no better than a baker. For my part, I should quarrel both with nature and fortune did I not know nature to be absolutely wise, and that fortune hath a thousand eyes, although fools have described her as blind. I suppose, therefore, that both, being truly wise and judicious, act as we ourselves often do; who, uncertain of what may happen, for our convenience often bury our most valuable treasure in the meanest places of our houses, as the least liable to suspicion; from whence we can fetch them in time of need, and where they have continued more secure than they would have been in the best chamber of the house. So these two ministers of the world do many times hide their most precious blessings under the cover of some mean employ,

to the end that, drawing them from thence when need requires, they may appear with greater lustre which was plainly shewed, although in a small matter, by our baker Cisti, to the apprehension of Signor Geri Spina, whom the story of Madam Oretta, who was his wife, brings fresh into my mind; as I shall relate in a very short novel. You must know then that Pope Boniface, with whom this same Signor Geri was in great esteem, having an occasion to send ambassadors to Florence about some particular business, who being entertained at this Geri Spina's house, and employed with him in the said pope's negotiation, it happened, whatever was the reason, that they passed on foot every morning by the church of St. Maria Ughi where Cisti the baker dwelt, and followed his trade: who, though fortune had given him but a mean employ, yet in this respect she had been kind to him—that he had grown very rich in it; and, without having any desire to leave it for a better, lived very generously among his neighbours, having everything in plenty, the best wine especially, both red and white, that the country could afford. Now, he seeing them walk daily, by his door, and supposing, as the season was sultry, that it would be esteemed a kindness to let them drink some of his fine white wine, but regarding at the same time the disparity of their different stations, he would not presume to invite them; but thought of a way whereby Signor Geri might be induced of his own accord to taste it: having a white frock on, therefore, with an apron before him, which bespoke him rather a miller than a baker, every morning about the time that he supposed they should come that way, would he order a bucket full of ~~heat~~ water to be brought, and a decanter of wine, with a couple of beakers as bright as crystal, to be set before him; when, seating himself down at his door, and

clearing first his mouth and throat, he would take a draught or two just as they were going past, with a gust sufficient to cause an appetite almost in a man that was dead.

Signor Geri observing this once or twice, said, the third time, "What say you? Is your wine good, Master Cisti?" He starting up, replied, "Yes, sir; but how can I convince you unless you taste?" Signor Geri, whom either the heat of the weather or his extraordinary fatigue or perhaps the relish with which he saw the other drink, had rendered thirsty, turned with a smile upon the ambassadors, and said, "Gentlemen, we may as well drink of this honest man's wine, perhaps it is such that we shall not need to repent." Accordingly they went together to Cisti, who, ordering seats to be brought out of his bake-house, prayed them to sit down, saying to their servants, who offered to wash the glasses, "Friends, go get you gone; leave this to me. I am no worse a skinker than a baker, and stay you ever so long you shall not taste a drop." Washing then four neat glasses, and ordering a fresh decanter to be brought, he filled round to Signor Geri and the ambassadors, who thought it the best wine they had tasted a long time; and having highly commended it, they called to drink with him most mornings during their stay. At length having dispatched their business, and being about to depart, Signor Geri made an entertainment for them, to which he invited a great part of the most eminent citizens, and Cisti amongst the rest, who could by no means be persuaded to go. Signor Geri then ordered one of his servants to fetch a flask of Cisti's wine, and to fill half a glass round to all the company at the first table. The servant (offended, as we may suppose, that he had never been able to get a taste of it) took a very large bottle; which as soon as

Cisti saw, he said, "Friend, Signor Geri never sent thee to me." Which the servant affirming over and over, and yet meeting with no other reply, he returned to his master, and told him. Signor Geri then said, "Go back, and tell him that I did send thee, and if he makes the like answer again, ask him whither he thinks I should send thee." The servant went again, and said, "Most assuredly Signor Geri, my master, has sent me to you." Cisti made answer, "I tell thee, friend, it is impossible."—"Then," quoth the servant, "whither do you think he sent me?" He replied, "To the river Arno;" which when the fellow reported to Signor Geri, his eyes were immediately opened, and he said, "Let me see what bottle it was which you carried to him." On seeing it, he added, "Now, trust me, Cisti spoke truth." Reprimanding him then severely, he ordered him to take a more sizable vessel; which as soon as Cisti saw, he said, "Why now I am certain that he sent thee to me;" and filled it very readily for him. That day also he had a cask filled with the same wine, which he sent to Signor Geri's house, and going himself after it, he thus addressed him:—"Sir, I would not have you think that I was any way startled at the sight of the great bottle this morning; but as I imagined you had forgotten what I had endeavoured to intimate to you for several days past with my little decanters, namely, that mine is no wine for servants, so I only did it to remind you again of the same thing. But meaning to be steward no longer, I have now brought my whole store; dispose of it as you please." Signor Geri was extremely thankful for his most valuable present, and ever afterwards esteemed him as his most intimate friend.

NOVEL III

Madam Nonna de' Pulci silences the Bishop of Florence, by a smart reply to an unseemly piece of taillery.

PAMPINEA had now made an end, Cisti's answer and generosity being highly commended, when the queen gave her orders to Lauretta, who began as follows:—

Most gracious ladies, Pampinea, the other day, and Philomena now, have both justly touched upon our little merit, as well as the beauty of repartees: therefore, as it is needless to say any thing farther upon that head, I shall only remind you that your words should be such as only to nip or touch the hearer, like the sheep's nibbling on the grass, and not as the dog bites; for in that case it is no longer wit, but foul scurrility. This was excellently well set forth, both in what was said by Oretta, and in the reply of Cisti. It is true, however, that if it be spoken by way of answer, and bites a little too keenly; yet, if the person who answers in that manner were stung first, he is the less to blame. Therefore, you should be cautious both how, when, and with whom you jest; which not being enough attended to by a certain prelate of ours, he met with a sharper bite than he had given, as I shall shew you in a very short novel.

When Signor Antonio d'Orso, a most wise and worthy person, was bishop of Florence, a certain gentleman of Catalonia, marshal to King Robert, happened to come thither; who, having a good person, and being a great admirer of the fair sex, took a particular liking to a lady of that city, who was niece to the bishop's brother; and, understanding that her husband, though of a good family, was most abominably sordid and covetous, he agreed to give him five hundred florins of gold to let him pass one night with her. Accordingly, he got so many pieces of

silver gift, which he gave to him, and then obtained his desire contrary to her will and knowledge. This being discovered soon afterwards, the wretch became the common jest and scorn of mankind; but the bishop, like a wise man, seemed to know nothing of the matter. And, being often in company with the marshal, it happened on St. John's day, that, as they were riding side by side through the city, viewing the ladies all the way, that the bishop cast his eye upon one, named Nonna de' Pulci, then newly married, and who is since dead of the plague, cousin also to Alessio Rinucci, whom you all knew: this lady, besides her great beauty, was endowed with a generous spirit, and spoke pertinently and well. Shewing her, therefore, to the marshal, as soon as they came nearer to her, he laid his hand upon the marshal's shoulder, and said, "Madam, what do you think of this gentleman? Could he make a conquest over you or not?" This seemed to touch her honour, or at least she thought it might give some persons present a worse opinion of her. Without ever thinking, then, how to clear herself of such a charge, but resolving to return like for like, she replied, "Perhaps he might, my lord; but then I should like to be paid *with good money*." This touched them both to the quick; the one as doing a very dishonourable thing to the bishop's relation; the other as receiving in his own person the shame belonging to his brother. And they rode away, without so much as looking at one another, or exchanging a word together all the day after. Very justly, therefore, did this lady bite the biter.

NOVEL IV

Chichibio, cook to Currado Gianfiazzi, by a sudden reply, which he made to his master, turns his wrath into laughter, and so escapes the punishment with which he had threatened him.

LAURETTA being silent, Neophile was ordered to follow, which she did in this manner:—

Though ready wit and invention furnish people with words proper to their different occasions, yet sometimes does fortune, an assistant to the timorous, tip the tongue with a sudden, and yet a more pertinent reply than the most mature deliberation could ever have suggested, as I shall now briefly relate to you. Currado Gianfiazzi, as most of you have both known and seen, was always esteemed a gallant and worthy citizen, delighting much in hounds and hawks, to omit his other excellences, as no way relating to our present purpose. Now, he having taken a crane one day with his hawk, and finding it to be young and fat, sent it home to his cook, who was a Venetian, and called Chichibio, with orders to prepare it for supper. The cook, a poor simple fellow, trussed and spitted it, and when it was nearly roasted, and began to smell pretty well, it chanced that a woman in the neighbourhood called Brunetta, with whom he was much enamoured, came into the kitchen, and being taken with the high savour, earnestly begged of him to give her a leg. He replied very merrily, singing all the time, "Madam Brunetta, you shall have no leg from me." Upon this she was a good deal nettled, and said, "As I hope to live, if you do not give it me, you need never expect any favour more from me." The dispute, at length, was carried to a great height between them; when, to make her easy, ^{she} was forced to give her one of the legs. Accordingly the crane was served up at supper with only one leg; Currado

having a friend along with him. Currado wondered at this, and sending for the fellow, he demanded what was become of the other leg. He very foolishly replied, and without the least thought, "Sir, cranes have only one leg." Currado, in great wrath, said, "What the devil does the man talk of? Only one leg! Thou rascal, dost thou think I never saw a crane before?" Chichibio still persisted in his denial, saying, "Believe me, sir, it is as I say, and I will convince you of it whenever you please, by such fowls as are living." Currado was willing to have no more words, out of regard to his friend; only he added, "As thou undertakest to shew me a thing which I never saw or heard of before, I am content to make proof thereof to-morrow morning; but I vow and protest, if I find it otherwise, I will make thee remember it the longest day thou hast to live." Thus there was an end for that night, and the next morning Currado, whose passion would scarcely suffer him to get any rest, arose betimes, and ordered his horses to be brought out, taking Chichibio along with him towards a river where he used early in the morning to see plenty of cranes; and he said, "We shall soon see whether you spoke truth or not last night." Chichibio, finding his master's wrath not at all abated, and that he was now to make good what he had asserted, nor yet knowing how to do it, rode on first with all the fear imaginable: gladly would he have made his escape, but he saw no possible means; whilst he was continually looking about him, expecting everything that appeared to be a crane with two feet. But being come near to the river, he chanced to see, before anybody else, a number of cranes, each standing upon one leg as they use to do when ^{they} are sleeping; whereupon, shewing them quickly to his master, he said, "Now, sir, you yourself may see that I spoke nothing but truth, when I said that cranes have

only one leg: look at those there if you please." Currado, beholding the cranes, replied, "Yes, sirrah! but stay a while, and I will shew thee that they have two." Then riding something nearer to them, he cried out, "Shough! Shough!" which made them set down the other foot, and after taking a step or two, they all flew away. When Currado, turning to him, said, "Well, thou lying knave, art thou now convinced that they have two legs?" Chichibio, quite at his wit's end, and knowing scarcely what he said himself, suddenly made answer, "Yes, sir; but you did not shout out to that crane last night as you have done to these; had you called to it in the same manner, it would have put down the other leg, as these have now done." This pleased Currado so much that, turning all wrath into mirth and laughter, he said, "Chichibio, thou sayest right, I should have done so indeed." By this sudden and comical answer Chichibio escaped a sound drubbing, and made peace with his master.

NOVEL V

Forese da Rabatta and Giotto the painter, coming from Mugello, laugh at the meanness of each other's appearance.

THE ladies were much diverted with Chichibio's reply, when Pamphilus, by the queen's order, delivered himself to this effect:—

As it often happens that fortune hides, under the meanest trades in life, the greatest virtues, which has been proved by Pampinea, so are the greatest geniuses found frequently lodged by nature in the most deformed and misshapen bodies, which was verified in two of our own citizens, as I am now going to relate. For the one, who was called Forese da Rabatta, being a little deformed

mortal, with a flat Dutch face, worse than any of the family of the Baronci, yet was he esteemed by most men a repository of the civil law; and the other, whose name was Giotto, had such a prodigious fancy, that there was nothing in nature, the parent of all things, but he could imitate it with his pencil so well, and draw it so like, as to deceive our very senses, imagining that to be the very thing itself which was only his painting: therefore, having brought that art again to light, which had lain buried for many ages, under the errors of such as aimed more to captivate eyes of the ignorant, than to please the understandings of those who were really judges, he may be deservedly called one of the lights and glories of our city, and the rather as being master of his art, notwithstanding his modesty would never suffer himself to be so esteemed: which honour, though rejected by him, displayed itself in him with the greater lustre, as it was so eagerly usurped by others less knowing than himself, and by many also who had all their knowledge from him. But though his excellence in his profession was so wonderful, yet as to his person and aspect he had no way the advantage of Signor Forese. To come then to my story: These two worthies had each his country seat at Mugello, and Forese being gone thither in the vacation time, and riding upon an unsightly steed, chanced to meet there with Giotto, who was no better equipped than himself, when they returned together to Florence. Travelling slowly along, as they were able to go no faster, they were overtaken by a great shower of rain, and forced to take shelter in a poor man's house, who was well known to them both; and, as there was no appearance of the weather clearing up, and each being desirous of getting home that night, they borrowed two old rusty cloaks and two rusty hats, and they proceeded on their journey. After they

had gotten a good part of their way, thoroughly wet, and covered with dirt and mire, which their two shuffling steeds had thrown upon them, and which by no means improved their looks, it began to clear up at last, and they, who had hitherto said but little to each other, now turned to discourse together, whilst Forese, riding along and listening to Giotto, who was excellent at telling a story, began at last to view him attentively from head to foot, and seeing him in that wretched dirty pickle, without having any regard to himself, he fell a laughing, and said, "Do you suppose, Giotto, if a stranger were to meet with you now, who had never seen you before, that he would imagine you to be the best painter in the world, as you really are?" Giotto readily replied, "Yes, sir, I believe he might think so, if, looking at you at the same time, he would ever conclude that you had learned your A, B, C." At this Forese was sensible of his mistake, finding himself well paid in his own coin.

NOVEL VI

Michael Scalza proves to certain young gentlemen, that the family of the Baronci is the most honourable of any in the world, and wins a supper by it.

THE ladies continued laughing at Giotto's smart reply, when the queen commanded Flammetta to follow, which she did to this purpose:—

The Baronci being mentioned by Pamphilus, though perhaps you may not know them so well as himself, puts me in mind of a story, in which their great nobility is plainly exhibited, without deviating from our present subject, and therefore I choose to relate it. There lived not long since in our city a young gentleman called Michael Scalza, who was one of the most agreeable and pleasant

companions in the world; for which reason his company was much courted by all the young people of Florence, whenever they could be favoured with it. Now he was one day with some friends at Mount Ughi, when the question happened to be started, which was the noblest and most ancient family in Florence? Accordingly one named the Uberti, another the Lamberti, some preferring one, and some another, according to their different humours and interests; upon which Scalza smiled and said, "You are all mistaken; the most noble, as well as the most ancient family, I do not say in Florence only, but in the whole world, is that of the Baronci; in this all philosophers are agreed, and every one that knows them as well as myself. And, lest you should think that I speak it of some other family of that name, I tell you that I mean the Baronci, our neighbours, that live by great St. Maria." When the young gentleman, who expected he would have mentioned some other, heard this family named, they made the greatest jest of it that could be, and said, "You impose any thing in the world upon us, as if nobody knew the Baronci but yourself." "Indeed," quoth he, "I do not, I speak nothing but what is truth, and if there is any one among you that dares lay a wager of a supper for six of his friends, upon that head, I will stand to it; nay, more than that, I will be set down by the judgment of any person whom you shall nominate." Hereupon a young spark called Neri Vannini, said, "I am your man." It was also agreed that one Piero, a Florentine, in whose house they were, should be judge. Accordingly the case was stated to him, whilst the whole company bore hard upon Scalza, making themselves very merry with his expected treat. Piero, then, who was a good sensible man, having heard Neri's story, turned to Scalza and said, "Well, how do you make good your assertion?" Scalza replied, "I prove

it by such arguments, that not yourself only, but even my antagonist shall confess to be just. You know that the more ancient any family is, the more noble it is deemed: this was agreed among us at the beginning. I have then only to shew, in order to gain my question, that the Baronci family is the most ancient of all others. You must understand, therefore, that they were formed when nature was in her infancy, and before she was perfect at her work, and that the rest of mankind were all created afterwards. To convince you of this, do but examine the figures of one and the other, you will find art and proportion in the last, whereas the first are rough drawn and imperfect: among them you will see one with a long narrow face, another with a prodigious broad one; one that is flat-nosed, another with a nose half an ell long; this has a long hooked chin, that one eye bigger and set lower down than the other. In a word, their faces resemble, for all the world, what children make when they first learn to draw. Nature then, you will allow, was in its first and earliest state when they were created, consequently they are the most ancient of all others, and therefore the most noble." Both Piero, who was to determine, and Neri, who had wagered the treat, and the whole company likewise, on hearing this pleasant argument, agreed that Scalza was in the right, and that the Baronci were the noblest and most ancient people in the whole world. Well therefore was it observed by Pamphilus, in describing the ugliness and deformity of Signor Forese, that, if possible, he had a worse person than any of the Baronci.

NOVEL VII

Madam Philippa being surprised with her gallant by her husband, is accused and tried for it; but saves herself by her quick reply; and has the laws moderated for the future.

SCALZA's argument to prove the nobility of the Baronci made them all very merry, when the queen turned to Philostratus, who began in this manner:—

It is a good thing, most worthy ladies, to be able to speak well, and to the purpose; but I hold it best of all to know how to do it when need requires: as was the case of a lady of whom I am going to treat, who escaped an ignominious death by this means, as you shall hear. In the territories of the town of Prato, there was formerly a most severe law, which, without any distinction, condemned all such women as were detected by their husbands of adultery to be burnt. Whilst this law was in force, it chanced that a beautiful young lady, named Philippa, was surprised by her husband with her gallant, a young gentleman of the same city, in her own chamber. Rinaldo de' Pugliesi, for that was the husband's name, was so provoked at this, that he could scarcely refrain from putting them both to death, and forbore it only out of regard to his own life; but yet he resolved that the law should effect what did not so properly belong to himself—the death of his wife. Therefore, having procured sufficient testimony to prove the fact, he went and had her summoned before the court. The lady, who was of an undaunted spirit, resolved to make her appearance, contrary to the judgment of her friends, choosing to die by a resolute confession of the truth, rather than to live basely in exile by making her escape; or, by denying it, to shew herself unworthy of that lover with whom she had this intrigue. Being brought then before the lord-provost, attended by a great number of friends, and encouraged all the way to

deny it, she demanded of him, with a steady countenance, what he had to say to her. The provost, seeing her genteel deportment and greatness of spirit, began to pity her, fearing lest she should confess something or other which would force him for the sake of his honour to condemn her, whilst she ceased not all the time to inquire the reason of her being brought thither. When he said to her, "Madam, here is Rinaldo, your husband, who affirms that he has taken you in adultery, and insists that I pronounce sentence of death upon you according to the law in that case; but this I cannot do unless you yourself confess it, therefore take care what answer you make, and tell me if this accusation of his be true." The lady, without shewing the least concern, replied, "My lord, it is true; I will never deny it; but you must know, at the same time, that laws ought to be universal, and made with the consent of those persons whom they concern. Now in this law of yours it was quite otherwise; for only we poor women are bound by it, and yet not one of us ever consented to, or were even consulted about, the making of it. I call it then a most iniquitous law; and if you are disposed to take away my life for the breach of it, I have no way to do myself justice, but by protesting in the face of this court, and before the whole world, against the partiality of your proceedings." All the principal people of the city were present to hear this process, who, hearing her plead her own cause in that manner, cried out, "That there was some reason in what she said;" and before they broke up, the law, by the interposition of the lord-provost, was moderated so far as to include only such women who wronged their husbands for the sake of money. On this Rinaldo departed from the court, confused at his disappointment, whilst she, saved as it were out of the fire, returned victorious to her own house.

NOVEL VIII

Fresco advises his niece that if she could not endure to look at any disagreeable people, she should never behold herself.

PHILOSTRATUS's novel had put the ladies into some confusion, as appeared by their blushes, when the queen turned immediately to Emilia, and desired her to begin; who, starting up as if she had been raised out of her sleep, spoke to this effect:—

I have been so long lost in thought that I shall now obey the queen by relating a much shorter novel than I should have done, probably, had I more time to recollect myself. This will be concerning the foolish affectation of a certain young lady, which was very wittily reproved by her uncle, if she had but sense enough to have taken it. An honest man, named Fresco da Celatico, had a niece called out of fondness Cesca, *i.e.*, for Francesca, who, though her person was not amiss (she was no angel either !) yet she thought so highly of herself that she was perpetually finding fault both with men, women, and, in short, everything that she saw, without having the least regard to herself all the time: for by that means she became such a disagreeable, fretful, and tiresome creature, that nothing was ever like her, and so proud withal that had she been of the blood royal of France she could not have been more so. And if she walked along the street at any time, she did nothing but toss up her nose all the way, as if everyone that she either saw or met was offensive to her. To omit the rest of her troublesome ill-conditioned ways, it chanced one day that she came home pouting extremely with pride and affectation, and sitting down by him, he said to her, “Cesca, as this is a holiday, what is the reason you come home so soon?” When she, fit to die away with her airs, replied, “I am returned so early because I

could not have believed there had been such a number of frightful people, both men and women, in the country, as I have met with to-day; there was not one that I could like, nor can any woman have the aversion to disagreeable people that I have; it is to avoid seeing them, therefore, that I am come so soon. Fresco, then, who could no longer brook her inordinate affectation, replied roughly to her, "Niece, if disagreeable persons displease you so much, and you are willing to be at ease, be sure you never look at yourself." She, however, as empty as a pithless cane, though she thought herself as wise as Solomon, understood her uncle's meaning no more than a goose, but said she would look at herself as well as other people. Thus she remained in her ignorance, and, for what I know, still continues in the same state.

NOVEL IX

Guido Cavalcanti genteelly reprimands the folly of some Florentine gentlemen, who came unawares upon him.

THE queen, perceiving that Emilia had done her novel, and that only herself remained, excepting him—whose privilege it was to speak last, began as follows:—

Though you have robbed me of two of my novels, one of which I designed should have served me to-day, yet have I one left behind still, which contains something in the conclusion as pertinent, perhaps, as anything that hath yet been spoken.—Know, then, that formerly many good customs prevailed in our city, none of which are now remaining, thanks be to avarice, the attendant of our growing wealth, which has long discarded them. This, amongst others, was one—that, in divers parts of the town, the best families in the neighbourhood would meet

together and compose a society, consisting of a certain number of persons, taking care always to admit only such as were able to bear the expense of it. Every one entertained in his turn, at which time they would shew honour to divers gentlemen and strangers upon their arrival in our city, and to many of the most worthy citizens, by inviting them to those assemblies: once a year also, at least, they would be dressed all alike, and they often rode in procession through the city, when they performed their tilts and other martial exercises, especially on the great festival days or when the news of some great victory had reached the city. Amongst these societies of gentlemen there was one of which Signor Betto Brunelleschi was the principal, who was desirous always of procuring Guido Cavalcanti to be one of their body, and not without reason; for, besides his being one of the best logicians in the world, as well as natural philosopher, for which they had no great regard, he was a most polite good-natured man, as well as an excellent companion, and nobody knew what belonged to a gentleman better than himself: besides this, he was very rich, and ready always to reward merit wher- ever he found it. But Signor Betto was never able to draw him into their assembly, which they all attributed to his speculative way of life; and because he was said to hold some of the Epicurean doctrines the vulgar used to report that all this study of his was only to learn whether there was a God or not. One day he was passing from St. Michael's church along by the Ademari to St. John's, which was his usual walk, and the large marble tombs, such as are now at St. Reparata's, were then about the church: and he chanced to be amongst them, the church door being shut, when Betto and his company came riding through the square; who, getting sight of him, spurred their horses and came up to him before he perceived them;

whilst one of them said, “Guido, thou refusest to be of our society: but when thou hast found out that there is no God, what good will it have done thee?” He, seeing himself surrounded, immediately replied, “Gentlemen, you may use me as you please in your own territories;” and, laying his hand upon one of the arches, he leaped nimbly over it and so made his escape. They looked like people confounded at each other, saying that what he had spoken was without any meaning; for that they had no more to do there than any other persons, nor Guido less than themselves. Signor Betto then turned to them and said, “It is yourselves, Gentlemen, that are void of understanding; for he has very worthily, and in few words, said the severest thing in the world to us, whether you understood it or not: consider, then, these arches are the abodes of the dead, and which he calls our territories, to shew us that we, and all other people as ignorant and unlearned as ourselves, are, compared to him and other men of letters, worse than dead men; and, therefore, so long as we are here we may be said to be upon our own dung-hills.”—They now all understood what Guido meant to say, and were a good deal ashamed, and from that time said nothing more ever to provoke him; esteeming Signor Betto always as a very subtle and sensible man.

NOVEL X

Friar Onion promises some country people to shew them a feather from the wing of the angel Gabriel; instead of which he finds only some coals, which he tells them are the same that roasted St. Laurence.

AFTER they had told all their different stories, and Dioneus perceived that only himself was left to speak, without waiting for any regular command, he enjoined silence to such

as were commanding Guido's deep reply, and thus began:—

Though I boast it, ladies, as my privilege to relate what pleases me most, yet I intend not to-day to depart from the subject which you have all spoken so well upon; but, following your footsteps, I shall shew with what a sudden shift a certain friar, of the order of St. Anthony, most artfully avoided the disgrace and confusion which two arch young fellows had prepared for him: and if, to make my story more complete, I spin it out a little in length, I hope it will not be disagreeable, as the sun is yet in the midst of heaven.

Certaldo, as you have all heard, is a village in the vale of Elsa, dependent on the state of Florence; which, though small, was inhabited by many gentlemen and people of substance. Thither a certain friar, of the order of St. Anthony, used to go once a year, as he found pretty good pickings, to receive the contributions of many simple people, and met with great encouragement always, perhaps not through any devotion so much as his name; for that country was famous for the best onions in all Tuscany. Now this friar had a little low person, was red-haired, and of a merry countenance, as artful a knave too as any in the world: add to this, that, though he was no scholar, yet was he so prompt and valuable of tongue, that such as knew him not would not only have considered him as some great orator, but have compared him even to Tully or Quintilian. He was also a common gossip-acquaintance to the whole neighbourhood. Coming thither, therefore, in the month of August, according to custom, one Sunday morning, when all the honest people were met together in the church to hear mass, as soon as he saw a fit opportunity, he stepped forward and said:

“Gentlemen and ladies, you know it has been a com-

mendable custom with you to send every year to the poor brethren of our Lord Baron St. Anthony, both of your corn and other provisions, some more, and some less, according to your several abilities and devotions, to the end that our blessed St. Anthony should be more careful of your oxen, sheep, asses, swine, and other cattle. Moreover, you are accustomed to pay, such especially as have their names registered in our fraternity, a small acknowledgement which we annually receive, and for which purpose I am now sent by my superior, namely, our lord abbot, to collect it. Therefore, with the blessing of God, after nine o'clock, as soon as you shall hear the bells ring, you may all come to the church-door, when I shall preach a sermon as usual, and you shall all kiss the cross: and, besides this, as I know you all to be devoted to our Lord St. Anthony, I intend, as a special favour, to shew you one of the feathers of the angel Gabriel, which he dropped, at the annunciation, in the Virgin's chamber; and, having made this speech, he returned to mass. Whilst he was haranguing upon this subject, there were two arch fellows in the church, one named Giovanni del Bragoniera, and the other Biagio Pizzini, who, after they had laughed together at the father's relics, although they were his friends and acquaintance, resolved to play him a trick with regard to this feather: and, understanding that he was to dine that day with a friend, as soon as they thought he might be set down at table, they went to the inn where he lodged; when Biagio was to keep his man in talk, whilst Giovanni ransacked his wallet to steal this feather, that they might see what he would then say to the people. Now the friar had a lad with so many different nick-names and qualities, that the most fertile imagination was hardly able to describe them. Whilst Father Onion used frequently to jest and say, "My rascal

has in him nine qualities, if any one of which belonged either to Solomon, Aristotle, or Seneca, it would baffle and confound all their philosophy, and all their virtue. You may suppose then what sort of creature he must be, that has nine such, without either philosophy or virtue to counterbalance." Being asked what those nine qualities were, and having put them into a kind of rhyme, he answered,

"Forgetfulness, lying, and lewdness ;
Filching, facing, and nastiness ;
Sloth, gracelessness, and extravagance.

"Besides these, he has also many others, and one in particular I cannot help laughing at, which is, that he is for taking a wife wherever he goes: and having a great black greasy beard, he is persuaded that all women must fall in love with him; or, should they take no notice of him, he will be sure to run after them. But yet he is a notable fellow to me in one respect, that if anybody has a secret to communicate, he will come in for his share of it; and should anyone ask me a question, he is so fearful that I should not know how to make an answer, that he will be sure to say, Yes, or No, before me, just as he thinks most proper." But to return to our story. This fellow, Friar Onion, left at the inn, with a particular charge to see that nobody meddled with anything belonging to him, especially his wallet, because the holy relics were contained therein. But the man, whose inclinations stood more for the kitchen, as soon as his master was gone, went down thither, where he found a fat, dirty, ill-favour-ed kitchen wench; when falling into discourse together, he sat down by the fireside, though it was in August, whilst she was busy in cooking, and began to tell her he was a gentleman, and worth an incredible sum of money; that

he could do and say wonders, and (without considering that his own hat was all over grease and dirt; that his jacket was nothing but a thousand different patches; that his breeches were torn throughout, and his shoes all to pieces) he talked as great as if he had been some lord, saying, that he would buy her new clothes, and take her out of service, and that she should partake of his present possessions, as well as future fortunes, with a great deal more of that kind of stuff, more froth and wind. The two young fellows finding him thus engaged, were very well satisfied, supposing half their work to be done; and leaving them together, they went upstairs into the friar's chamber, which was unlocked, when the first thing they saw was the wallet: this they opened, and found a cabinet wrapped up in some foldings of fine taffeta in which was a parroquet's feather, which they supposed to be the same that he had promised to shew the people; and surely at that time it was easy enough to impose upon them in that manner. The eastern luxury had not then reached Tuscany, which has since flowed in upon us, to the ruin of our country; the ancient simplicity still prevailed; nor was there a person, so far from seeing, that had ever heard of such a thing as a parrot. Not a little pleased at meeting with this feather, they took it away, and, that the box should not be empty, put some coals therein, which they saw lying in a corner of the chamber; and wrapping it up again as before, and making all safe, they walked off, waiting to see how he would behave when he found the coals instead of the feather. The people that were at church being told that they were to see the angel's feather, went home and acquainted all their neighbours, and the news ran from one to another, so that the moment dinner was over, they all crowded to the town, in such manner, that every part was full, waiting for the sight.

Accordingly Friar Onion, having eat a good dinner, and taken his nap after it, understanding now that there were great multitudes expecting him, sent to the servant to come away with his wallet, and ring to church. The fellow, though loath to leave his mistress and the fire-side, did as he ordered him, and fell to chiming the bells. As soon then as the people were all assembled, the friar, not perceiving that anything had been meddled with, entered upon his discourse, running over a thousand things proper to his purpose; and being come to the shewing of the feather, he began, with a solemn confession, and lighting up two torches, and gently unwrapping the silken cover, having first pulled off his cap, he took out the box, and making some short ejaculations to the praise and honour of the angel Gabriel, and of that relic, he opened it. When seeing it full of coals he could not help secretly blaming himself for leaving such a fellow in trust, who, he imagined, had been imposed upon by somebody or other; but yet, without so much as changing colour, or shewing the least concern, he lifted up his eyes and hands to heaven, and said, "O God, blessed for ever be thy power and might!" And shutting the box, he turned again to the people, and added, "Gentlemen and ladies, you must all understand, that being very young, I was sent by my superior to those parts where the sun first appears, with an express command to injure into the nature of porcelain, which, though it cost but little in making, affords more profit to others than it does to us. For this purpose I embarked at Venice, and went through Greece; I proceeded thence, on horseback, through the kingdom of Garbo, and through Baldacca; afterwards I came to Parione, and so to Sardinia. But what need I mention to you all these places? I coasted on still, till I passed the straits of St. George, into Truffia, and then into

Buffia, which are countries much inhabited, and with great people. From thence into the land of Lying, where I found many of our order, as well as of other religions, who avoid all labour and trouble, for Heaven's sake; taking no care for other people's sufferings, when their own interest is promoted thereby, and where they spend only uncoined money.

"Thence I went to the land of Abruzzi, where the men and women go upon socks over the mountains, and make themselves garments of swines' guts, and where they carried bread in their staves and wine in satchels. Parting from thence I came to the mountains of Bacchus, where the waters all run down hill. Last of all I arrived in India Pastinaca, where, I swear to you by the habit I wear, that I saw serpents fly, a thing incredible to such as have never seen it: but I should be loath to lie, and therefore, as soon as I departed thence, I met Maso del Saggio, a great merchant, whom I found cracking nuts and selling the shells by retail. Nevertheless, not being able to find what I went to look for, and being to pass from thence by water, I returned to the Holy Land; where in summer a loaf of cold bread is worth four-pence and the hot is given away for nothing. There I found the venerable father (blame me not I beseech you) the patriarch of Jerusalem, who, out of reverence to my habit and love to our Lord Baron St. Anthony, would have me see all the holy relics which he had in keeping, and which were so many that were I to recount them I should never come to an end: but yet, not to leave you altogether disconsolate, I shall mention a few. First, then, he shewed me a finger of the Holy Ghost, as whole and perfect as ever; next a lock of hair of that seraph which appeared to St. Francis; with the paring of a nail of a cherub; and a rib of the Verbum Caro, fastened to one of the windows;

some vestments of the holy catholic faith; and a few rays of that star which appeared to the wise men: a vial also of St. Michael's sweat when he fought with the devil; the jaw-bone of St. Lazarus, and many others. And because I gave him two of the plains of Mount Morello, in the vulgar edition, and some chapters del Caprezio, which he had been long searching after, he let me partake of his relics. And, first, he gave me a tooth of the Sancta Crux; and a little bottle filled with some of the sound of those bells which hung in the temple of Solomon; a feather also of the angel Gabriel, as I have told you; with a wooden patten, which the good St. Gherrardo da Villa Magna used to wear in his travels, and which I have lately given to Gherrardo di Bonsi, at Florence, who holds it in great veneration. He farther gave me some of the coals on which our blessed martyr St. Laurence, was broiled, all which I devoutly received, and do now possess. It is true my superior would not suffer me to make them public till he was assured that they were genuine; but being now convinced of it by sundry miracles, as well as by letters received from the patriarch, he has given me leave to shew them; and which, for fear of trusting anyone with them, I always carry with me. Indeed, I have the angel's feather, for its better preservation, in a wooden box, and I have St. Laurence's coals in another, and which are so like each other that I have often mistaken them; and so it has happened now, for instead of that with the feather I have brought the box which contains the coals. This I would not have you call an error; no, I am well assured it was Heaven's particular will, now I call to mind that two days hence is the feast of St. Laurence. Therefore it was ordered that I should shew you the most holy coals on which he was broiled, to kindle in your hearts that true devotion which you ought to have towards him, and

not the feather; approach then, my blessed children, with reverence, and uncover your heads with all due devotion whilst you behold them. But first I must acquaint you that whoever is marked with these coals with the sign of the cross may live secure for one whole year, that no fire shall have any power over him." So, singing a hymn to the praise of St. Laurence, he opened the box and shewed the coals, which the simple multitude beheld with the utmost zeal and astonishment, and crowded about him with larger offerings than usual, entreating to be signed by them. Then taking the coals in his hands, he began to mark all their white mantles, fine jackets, and veils, with the largest crosses that could be made upon them, affirming that what was consumed of the coals in this manner grew again in the box, as he had frequently experienced. Thus having crossed all the people of Certaldo to his own great benefit; by this dexterous device he laughed in his sleeve at those who had designed to have made a jest of him. And they being present at his discourse, and hearing this sudden shift of his and how he had set it off to the multitude, were ready to die with laughter. After the people were all departed, they went and told him, with all the pleasure in the world, what they had done, and returned him his feather, which served him the following year to as good purpose as the coals had done that day.

This novel afforded great mirth to the whole company, and they laughed heartily at the father, his pilgrimage, and holy relics. Whilst the queen, knowing her reign to be at an end, took the crown from her own head, and placed it with a smile upon Dioneus, saying: "It is now time for you to prove what a task it is to govern women. Be king, therefore, and rule in such a manner that in the end we may have reason to praise you." Dioneus, accepting the

crown, replied merrily, "I doubt not but you may have often seen a better king among the chess-men than I shall make ; but yet, if you will obey me, I will take care you shall have plenty of that, without which no entertainment is ever thoroughly agreeable ; I mean that I will direct according to my own taste and fancy." Calling then the master of the household, he ordered what should be done during his own royalty, when he added, "Ladies, we have had so many subjects already, showing the several devices and means of human industry, that I am at a loss what to give you, unless you will accept of the following, namely, concerning such tricks and stratagems as women, either out of love or for their own security, have put upon their husbands, whether they have been detected or not." This seemed not so decent to some of the ladies, and they desired him to change it. But he replied, "Ladies, I know as well as you do what the subject is, and all that you can allege will have no weight with me to make me alter it ; considering that the season now is such that, provided we have regard to our actions, any discourse for a little amusement is allowable. Know you not that through the malignity of the times the judges have now left their tribunals, the laws both Divine and human are silent, and every one has leave to do what he thinks necessary for his own preservation ? Therefore, if we take a little more liberty than ordinary in our discourse, with no bad intention, but only to pass away our time in an innocent inoffensive manner, I see no room for reflexion. Besides, from the very first day of our meeting we have kept always within the bounds of decency, and so I hope we shall continue to do. Who is there also that is unacquainted with your modesty and virtue ? Which, so far from being shaken by any light discourse, would beproof even against the terrors of death. And to tell you the truth, whoever should see you averse to

such little diversions, might suspect that your characters were not so clear as they should be, and that you refused to join in them for that reason. Not to mention the little honour you do me in first choosing me your king, and then refusing to obey my commands. Away then with this suspicion, more befitting base and wicked dispositions than such as yours ; and, without farther hesitation, let everyone think of some pleasant story.”

Upon this they agreed that it should be as the king desired; and he then gave them leave to depart till supper-time. The sun was yet a good height, as the novels had been but short; therefore, whilst Dioneus, with the other gentlemen, were sat down to play at tables, Eliza called the other ladies apart, and said, “Ever since we have been here have I desired to show you to a place not far off, where I believe none of you ever was, and which is called the Ladies’ Valley; nor have I had an opportunity before to-day of doing it. As it is yet some hours till night, if you would choose then to go thither, I daresay you will be pleased with your walk.” The ladies answered that they were all willing, and, without saying a word to the gentlemen, they called one of their women to attend them, and after a walk of near a mile they came to the Ladies’ Valley, which they entered by a straight path; from whence there issued forth a fine crystal current, and they found it so extremely beautiful and pleasant, especially at that sultry season, that nothing could exceed it; and, as some of them told me afterwards, the plain in the valley was as exact a circle as if it had been described by a pair of compasses, though it seemed rather the work of nature than art, and was about half a mile in circumference, surrounded with six mountains of moderate height, on each of which was a palace built in form of a little castle. The descents from these mountains were as regular as we see in a

theatre, when the circle of each landing grows gradually less and less till it comes to the bottom. Whilst that part that looks towards the south was planted as thick as they could stand together with vines, olives, almonds, cherries, figs, and most other kinds of fruit trees; and on the northern side fine plantations of oaks, ashes, etc., so tall and regular that nothing could be more beautiful. The vale, which had only that one entrance, was full of firs, cypress trees, laurels, and pines, all placed in such order as if it had been done by the direction of some exquisite artist, and through which little or no sun could penetrate to the ground, which was covered with a thousand different flowers.

But what gave no less delight than any of the rest was a rivulet that came through a valley which divided two of the mountains, and running through the vein of a rock made a most agreeable murmur with its fall, appearing, as it was dashed and sprinkled into drops, like so much quicksilver; which arriving in the plain beneath was there received in a fine canal, and, running swiftly to the middle of the plain, formed a basin not deeper than the breast of a man, which shewed its clear gravelly bottom, with pebbles intermixed, so that anyone might see and count them; the fishes also appeared swimming up and down in great plenty, which made it wonderfully pleasant; whilst the water that overflowed was received in another little canal, which conveyed it out of the valley. Hither the ladies all came together, and, after much praising the place and seeing the basin before them and that it was very private, they agreed to bathe. Ordering, therefore, their maid to keep watch, and to let them know if anybody was coming, they stripped and went into it; and it covered their delicate bodies in like manner as a rose is concealed in a crystal glass. After they had diverted themselves there for

some time with bathing, they clothed themselves again and returned at a gentle pace, commanding all the way the wonderful beauty of the spot; and coming to the palace they found the gentlemen at play where they left them. When Pampinea said merrily to them, "We have put a trick upon you to-day."—"What," says Dioneus, "do you begin to act before you speak?"—"No, sir," quoth Pampinea. And she told them where they had been, what sort of a place it was, how far it was off, and what they had been doing. The king, upon her report, being very desirous of seeing it, ordered supper to be served immediately, which was no sooner ended than the gentlemen and their servants all went to this valley, and having viewed every part, as they were never there before, they agreed that nothing in the world ever equalled it. They bathed, therefore, and made what haste they could back, as it grew late, when they found the ladies dancing to a song of Flaminetta's, which being ended they were all loud in their praises of this valley. The king then called to the master of the household, and gave orders that dinner should be served there on the morrow, and beds carried for such as would choose to rest during the heat of the day. When this was over he ordered in candles, wine, and sweet-meats, and, having refreshed themselves, he bid them now prepare for a dance: and Pamphilus, by his appointment, having made a beginning, his majesty turned to Eliza, and said pleasantly to her, "Fair lady, you did me the honour of conferring upon me a crown yesterday; in return, I fix now upon you for a song: let it be such an one as is most agreeable to yourself." She smiled, and saying, with all her heart, began with a sweet voice the following:

SONG

CHORUS

O love, could I escape from thee
 I always would be free.

I

From early youth I chose
 Thy service as a sweet repose,
 And all my power to thee consign'd
 But see, at last,
 Thou, cruel tyrant, and unkind,
 Hast bound me in thy fetters fast.
 O love, etc.

II

'Tis for a faithless swain
 I languish and complain ;
 Nor sighs, nor tears can move
 His heart to love.
 O love, etc.

III

The winds, with inauspicious breeze,
 Waft my unheeded pray'rs away,
 Whilst hourly I decay ;
 Yet neither life nor death can please.
 Then yield, in pity to my woe,
 That he thy bondage too may know,
 O love, etc.

IV

Cupid, I humbly ask of thee,
 Or grant me this, or set me free ;
 This favour if thou wilt bestow.
 My youthful bloom
 I shall resume,
 And on my face again the rose and lily blow.

CHORUS

O love, could I escape from thee
 I always would be free.

THE DECAMERON

Eliza concluded her song with a most piteous sigh; and all of them wondered what the words could mean; but the king, being in a good temper, called for Tindarus, and bid him bring out his bagpipe, to which they danced several dances; till a good part of the night being spent in that manner, they gave over and went to bed.

THE SEVENTH DAY

THERE was not a star to be seen in the east, but that alone which we call bright Lucifer, which yet shone gloriously in the dawning day; when the master of the household arose, and went with the necessary provisions to the Ladies' Valley, to have every thing ready there, according to the king's command; and he, being roused by the noise of the carriages, arose soon afterwards, and had all the company called, when they began their march just as the sun was appearing above the earth; nor did the nightingales and other birds ever seem to sing with such exquisite harmony as on that morning. Being ushered on the way by this music, they came to the Ladies' Valley, where, being saluted by choirs of many others, it appeared to them as if all the birds in the valley joined in concert to rejoice at their arrival. Now, viewing it all over again, it seemed much more delightful than the day before, as the gaiety of the morning was more conformable to the beauty of its appearance. After a repast of wine and sweetmeats, not to be behindhand with the birds, they began to sing, whilst the valley all around echoed back their songs: and the birds, unwilling to be outdone, replied in new and ravishing notes. At the usual hour the table was spread under the shade of the trees, by the side of that beautiful lake, whilst the whole time of dining were they amusing themselves with observing the fishes swimming before them, which afforded various matter for discourse. When the tables were removed, they turned again to sing as merrily as before. Whilst beds being

prepared in different parts of the valley, made close like pavilions, the king gave leave for such as desired it to go to sleep, and the rest had liberty to amuse themselves in the meantime as usual. At the appointed time they met by the basin side near where they had dined, and sitting down upon carpets, which were spread there for them, the king desired Emilia to begin, and she, with a smile, complied.

NOVEL I

Gianni Lotteringhi hears a knocking at his door, and wakes his wife, who makes him believe it is a spirit, and they both go to conjure it away with a certain prayer, after which the noise ceases.

SIR, I had much rather anyone else had begun such a fine subject, as this is, than myself; but, since it is your pleasure that I should be first, I am ready to comply. I purpose, therefore, to relate what may be of use to you for the time to come; for, if other ladies are as timorous with regard to spirits as I am (although I know nothing certain about them, nor have I met with anybody yet that does), they will here learn a good and effectual prayer to drive them away.

There dwelt formerly at Florence, in the street of St. Brancazio, a certain wool-comber, called Gianni Lotteringhi, one more fortunate in his trade than wise in other respects; for, being an easy sort of a man, he was frequently chosen a director of the singers in new St. Maria's church, when they had their meetings at his house, and other little favours they shewed him, upon which he greatly valued himself. This was because he gave considerable alms to the brethren there, and, in return for shoes, hoods, and cloaks, which they were daily getting from him, they presented him with the Pater Noster in the vulgar tongue,

the song of St. Alexis, the lamentation of St. Bernard, the hymn of Lady Matilda, with more such sort of ware, which he set great store by, and kept carefully for his soul's health and welfare. Now he had a gay, handsome wife, called Tessa, the daughter of Mannuccio dalla Cuculia, an artful, sensible woman, who, knowing the simplicity of her husband, and being in love with Federigo di Neri, an agreeable young man, she contrived with her maid that he should come to see her at a country-house which Gianni had, at a place called Camerata, where she used to pass the summer, when her good man would come sometimes thither to sup, and stay all night, and return in the morning to his prayers and his shop.

Accordingly, Federigo came and spent that night with her, when it was agreed between them not to have always the trouble of sending for him, that, as often as he went backwards and forwards, he should look to a vineyard, which was by the side of the house, where he would see an ass's skull fixed upon one of the poles there, and when the snout of that was turned towards Florence, he might safely come, and if the door was shut, upon knocking three times, she would let him in: but if it was turned towards Fiesole, he should then depart, for he might be assured her husband was with her at that time. By this contrivance they had frequent meetings. But one night it happened, that, expecting Federigo to sup with her, she had provided a couple of fowls, when her husband chanced to come in late, at which she was greatly concerned, and they sat down together to a little bacon which she had boiled by itself, whilst she ordered the maid to carry, in a clean napkin, the fowls, with some eggs for sauce, and a bottle of wine, into the garden (to which there was a way without going through the house, and where she and her lover used frequently to meet), and to lay them under

a certain peach-tree adjoining to the fields. And her hurry was so great, that she forgot to desire the maid to wait till Federigo came, to tell him that her master was then at home, and that he should take those things away with him. Therefore, Gianni and she being gone to bed together, and the maid likewise, it was not long before Federigo came, and tapped gently at the door, which was so near to their chamber that Gianni immediately heard it, as did his wife, who, to prevent any suspicion, pretended to be asleep. Presently he knocked a second time, at which Gianni was surprised, and began to jog her, saying, "Do not you hear? Somebody knocks at our door." She, who heard it better than himself, pretended to wake out of her sleep, and said, "What is the matter?" "I tell you," quoth he, "that I thought somebody was at our door." "At our door!" She replied, "Alas! do not you know what that is? It is a spirit, which has terrified me so for several nights past, that I have covered myself in bed, and not dared to look about me again till it was broad daylight." "Go," quoth Gianni, "why should you be afraid, if it is so? For, before I went to bed, I said the *Te lucis*, and the *Intemerata*, with divers other good prayers, and I signed all the bed-posts with the cross, so that it can have no power over us." The lady now, to prevent Federigo's taking any offence at her, thought it best to arise, and let him understand, by some means or other, that Gianni was there: therefore she said to her husband, "What you have done may have secured yourself; but, for my part, I shall not think myself so, unless we conjure it down now you are here." "Conjure it down!" quoth Gianni; "how is that to be done?" "Oh," said she, "I know how to do it; for the other day, when I went to Fiesole for a pardon, one of those recluses, a most religious lady, seeing me afraid, taught me a certain

prayer, which she assured me, she had often tried to good purpose before she was a nun. Alas ! I could never have the boldness to make use of it alone; but, as you are now with me, we will go together, and repeat it." Gianni declared that he was willing; and so they went softly to the door, whilst Federigo began to be uneasy at waiting there so long. "Now," she said to Gianni, "you must take care to spit when I desire you." "I will," he replied. She then began her charm, and said, "Spirit, spirit, as you came, the same way you may go; but look in the garden, and you will find two fowls, some eggs and a bottle of wine, drink of the wine, and go away, and hurt not me nor my Gianni." Having done this, she said to her husband, "Spit, Gianni." Accordingly, Gianni spit. Whilst Federigo, who was without, and heard this, was roused from his jealousy; and, with all his disappointment, had much ado to keep from laughing out, saying to himself, "I wish you had spit out your teeth." She repeated it three times, and then they went to bed. Federigo, who had depended upon supping with her, and was fasting, hearing this charm, went to the peach-tree, and found the capons, wine, and eggs, and carried them home, when he made a good supper; and being with her some time after, they were very merry concerning this enchantment. Now some people tell the story otherwise, and affirm that the ass's head was turned towards Fiesole, but a labourer in the vineyard gave it a turn by chance with his stick, and so set it the wrong way, which occasioned Federigo's coming at that time; whilst she made use of the following words, "Spirit, spirit, go away in God's name; it was not I, but somebody else, that turned the ass's head. Plague on him, whoever it was; but I am here with my husband;" and that he went away without his supper. But a certain old lady, a neighbour of mine,

told me that both the stories were true, as she had heard when she was a child, and that the latter did not happen to Gianni Lotteringhi, but to one called Gianni di Nello, just such another simpleton as Gianni Lotteringhi. Then pray, ladies, take which charm you like best: both have been of service to others in this sort of cases, as you have heard. Try then, and they may be as useful to yourselves.

NOVEL II

Peronella puts her gallant into a tub on her husband's coming home, which tub, the husband had sold; she consequently tells him that she had also sold it to a person who was then in it to see if it were sound. Upon this the man jumps out, makes the husband clean it for him, and carries it home.

EMILIA's novel was heard with a great deal of mirth, and the charm esteemed a very good one, when the king ordered Philostratus to follow, which he did in the following manner:—

My dear ladies, the tricks which are put upon you by us men, and especially by your husbands, are so many that if ever it happens that a woman does the like, you should not only be pleased to hear of it, but you yourselves should spread it everywhere, to let the men understand, that if they are wise you are so too. This must have a good effect, for when it is known that people are forewarned, nobody would go about so soon to deceive them. Who sees not then that this day's discourse being noised among the men, may not be a restraint upon them in that respect when they come to find that you know how to serve them in the same way? I will tell you, therefore, what a woman, though but of mean rank, did to her husband in a moment, as it were for her own safety.

It was not long since that a poor man at Naples married a young handsome wife, named Peronella; and he being a mason, and she spinning every day, they managed to gain a tolerable livelihood. Now it happened that a young man in the neighbourhood took a liking to her, and making a discovery of his inclinations, it was at length agreed between them, that as the husband went out every morning to his work, he should watch that opportunity to come to her, which accordingly he did more than once. But one morning amongst the rest the honest man being gone abroad, and Gianello Strignario, for that was the gallant's name, visiting her as usual, in a little time the husband returned, though he was not used to come home till night, and finding the door bolted on the inside, he knocked, and then said to himself, "Thank Heaven, though I am poor, I have an honest and careful wife; for no sooner am I gone out but she makes all fast, that nobody should come, in my absence, to do us any injury." Peronella, who knew it was her husband by his manner of knocking, said, "Alas, Gianelló, I am a dead woman; my husband is returned; I cannot imagine for what reason, unless it was that he saw you come in; but, for God's sake, be it as it will, go you into that tub, whilst I open the door, and we shall then see what this sudden return of his means." Accordingly he stepped into it, whilst she let her husband into the house; and putting on an angry look, she said, "Pray what new fancy is this, your coming home so early to-day? As far as I can find, you are disposed to do no more work, that you have now got your tools with you. And what are we to live upon in the meantime? Do you think I will suffer you to pawn my gown, and what few clothes I have? I do nothing but spin night and day, till I have worn my fingers to the very stumps, and all will scarcely find us

oil to our lamp. Husband, husband, there is not a neighbour we have but wonders and makes a jest of me for all the labour I undergo, and yet you return here, with your hands in your pockets, when you ought to be at work. Wretch that I am, in an ill hour was I born, and worse that I happened to meet with you! I could have had a young man that would have maintained me well, and I refused him for this creature here, who knows not how to value a good wife. Other women have a good time with their gallants; nay, some have two or three, and make their husbands believe the moon is made of green cheese; and because I am virtuous, and have no regard for such practices, for that reason I am used the worse; I see no cause why I should not have my gallants as well as they. I would have you know, that I have had offers of money and other things from a number of young gentlemen, but nothing of that kind could seduce me: no, I was never the daughter of such a mother, and yet you will come home when you ought to be at work." The husband then replied, "My dear, do not make yourself uneasy; I am no stranger to your merit, and have had farther proof of it this morning: I did go out to work indeed; but neither of us then knew that it was the feast of St. Galeone, which is to be kept holy, and for that reason am I returned; nevertheless, I have found means that we shall have bread for a month, for I have sold the tub, which you know has been long in our way, to this man whom I have brought with me, for five shillings." "This is so much the worse," answered she; "you that go up and down, and should know things better, to sell a thing for five shillings which I, a poor ignorant woman, that keep always within doors, considering the room it took up in our house, have now sold to an honest man for six, and who had just got into it

as you came to the door, to see whether it was sound." When the husband heard this he was over and above rejoiced, and said to the man he had brought, "Friend, you may go about your business; you hear it is sold for six, whereas you were to have given no more than five." "With all my heart," said the honest man, and away he went. "But," quoth Peronella to her husband, "as you are now here, even make the agreement with the man yourself." Giannello who was listening to what passed between them, hearing these words, came out of the tub; and, as if he knew nothing of the husband all the time, said, "Where is the good woman?" The husband, stepping forward, replied, "Here I am; what do you want?" "Who are you?" answered Giannello, "I want the woman who sold me the tub." "You may make the bargain with me," quoth the honest man, "for I am her husband." "Then," said Giannello, "the tub appears to be sound; but it seems as if you had kept something of dregs in it, for it is so crusted all over in the inside, that I cannot scratch off one bit with my finger-nail; therefore, I will not have it till it is made clean." Peronella replied, "This shall never break the bargain; my husband will soon clean it for you." The husband said, with all his heart; and laying down his iron tools, and stripping to his shirt, he got a scraper, and going into it with a candle, he fell to work: and whilst he was thus busied, she often calling out to him to scrape it well, they took care to employ their time in a different manner. At length, when the husband came out of the tub, she said to Giannello, "Here, honest man, to take the candle and see whether it is to your liking." He peeped into it, and said it was; gave them the six shillings, and had it carried to his own house.

NOVEL III

Friar Rinaldo has an affair with a lady in the neighbourhood, when he makes the husband believe that he is upon a charm to cure their child of the worms.

PHILOSTRATUS did not speak so covertly at last, but the ladies took his meaning, though they seemed to laugh at something else, when Eliza was now ordered to speak, which she did as follows:—

Emilia's conjuring down the spirit brings to mind another conjuring story, which, though it may not be equal to hers, yet as I can think of no other I shall relate it. There lived at Siena a genteel young man, and of a good family, called Rinaldo, who had long paid his court to a beautiful lady in the neighbourhood, wife to a certain rich man, but hitherto without effect. At length, whatever was the reason, he turned friar, and whether that kind of life was to his liking or not, he persevered in it. Though for a time therefore he had laid aside his regard for the lady, and other little vanities, yet ere long he was the same person again, affecting an extraordinary neatness in his dress, and making ballads and love songs, whilst he was constantly at balls and other diversions of that sort. But why am I so particular with this friar? Are not they all of the same stamp? Alas! to the scandal of a dissolute world, they are not ashamed to appear plump and ruddy, with their garments fine and delicate, whilst they walk along the streets, not like doves so much as high-crested cocks; and what is worse (not to mention their chambers being filled with pots of rich conserves, perfumes, and other costly compositions, with bottles of fine distilled-waters and oils, with vessels also of malmsey, and the best Greek wines, so that you would take them for a perfumer's or a druggist's shop), they are not ashamed I say, to have

it known they are guilty; supposing us to be ignorant that abstinence and a coarse diet make people less corpulent and more healthful; or that constant fasting and prayer should not cause them to be pale and out of order: and as if we had never heard that St. Dominic and St. Francis thought themselves well clothed when they had one suit of coarse russet cloth to keep out the cold, without ever thinking of so many changes of fine apparel for mere show only, and which the simple credulous multitude is obliged to pay for. Our friar then falling into his former way of living, began to renew his application to this lady; who, thinking him perhaps more agreeable than before, did not much withstand it, only she said, "What! do the friars give their minds to such things?" He replied, "Madam, take but my habit off, and I am like other men." Thus the affair was soon agreed, and they had frequent meetings afterwards. One day, among the rest, he went to visit her, and finding nobody with her besides a servant-maid, he sent his companion with her into a pigeon-loft to teach her some prayers there, whilst he and the lady, with a little infant of hers, went into the chamber, when she made the door fast: but the moment almost this was done the husband came, and called to her to open it. At this she was frightened to death and said, "What shall I do? my husband is here, and will now find out the cause of our acquaintance." The friar having his cloak and hood off, replied, "Had I but my clothes on we could find an excuse; but if you open the door and he finds me in this manner, we shall both be ruined." Then said she, "Put on your clothes instantly, and when you have done, take our child in your arms, and attend to what I shall say, to make your words agree with mine; and leave the rest to me." Now calling to her husband who continued knocking at the door, she said, "I am coming." Accord-

ingly she went to let him in, and putting on a cheerful countenance, she said, "Husband, it was the greatest blessing in the world that Friar Rinaldo happened to be here to-day, for otherwise we had certainly lost our child." The husband was ready to faint away, and inquired how it happened? "O husband," quoth she, "it had a fit, and I knew not what to do, when the friar luckily came in, and taking the child in his arms, he said, 'Madam, it is owing to worms which lie at his heart, and would soon kill him; but be not afraid, I will charm and destroy them all, so that before I leave him, he shall be as well as ever.' Now as we wanted you to say some prayers, and the maid did not know where to find you, he sent his friend to the top of the house to say them in your stead; whilst we shut ourselves up in this chamber, as nobody could be present at such a mystery besides the mother, and he has the child now in his arms, and only waits till his friend has made an end to conclude the whole process, for the child has come to himself already." The honest man, who, out of his great love for his child, was far from suspecting such a trick, fetched a deep sigh, and said, "I will go and see him."—"By no means," she replied, "for that will spoil the whole thing; but stay, I will see first if you may be admitted, and then call you." The friar, who heard the contrivance, was now dressed, and having the child in his arms, and every thing in readiness, he called out, "Madam, is not that your husband?"—"Yes," answered he, "I am here."—"Then come hither," quoth he, "and behold your son, whom I thought you would never more have seen alive. Take him, and in return make a statue of wax of the same bigness to the honour of St. Ambrose, through whose merits you have received this extraordinary favour." The child at seeing his father shewed several little acts of fondness, whilst he received

him with as much joy and wonder as if he had been raised from the dead, returning great thanks to the friar for what he had done. The companion also, hearing all that had passed, came down into the chamber, and said, "I have gone through all the prayers which you had enjoined me to repeat," Friar Rinaldo replied, "Brother, you have done well, and you see by our joint endeavours the child is recovered." The honest man on this treated them both with wine and sweetmeats, when they took their leave with great respect. And immediately he set about making the waxen image, and sent it to be set up with several others before the image of St. Ambrose; but not St. Ambrose of Milan.

NOVEL IV

Tofano shuts his wife one night out of doors; who, not being able to persuade him to let her come in, pretends to throw herself into a well, by throwing a stone in: he runs thither to see, during which she enters, and, locking him out, abuses him well.

ELIZA had no sooner made an end, than the king turned to Lauretta, who immediately began to this effect:—O Love, how great is thy prevailing influence! how various and subtle are thy devices! What artist, what philosopher, could ever think or contrive such shifts and evasions, as thou teachest in an instant to those that follow thy paths? All other instructions whatever are slow, compared to thine, as appears by what has already been said on the subject: to which I mean to add the stratagem of a certain lady, conducted in such a manner as nothing but love could ever have dictated.

There lived at Arezzo a certain rich man named Tofano, who had a very handsome woman for his wife, whose name was Madam Ghita, of whom all at once, and

without knowing why, he became extremely jealous. This greatly vexed the lady, who would frequently demand of him his reasons for such a suspicion; and he being able to assign none, but such as were general, or nothing to the purpose, she resolved to plague him with the real evil, which hitherto had only been imaginary. And having observed that a certain young gentleman had taken particular notice of her, she encouraged him so far, that they only waited for a favourable opportunity to put their design into execution. Amongst the rest of her husband's bad qualities, he had taken a great delight she saw, in drinking, which she not only seemed pleased with, but would persuade him to drink more. In this manner she used to make him drunk as often as she could, which afforded the first opportunity of being with her lover, and from that time they met continually by the same means. She depended indeed so much upon this drunken disposition of his, that she would not only bring her lover into her house, but even go and spend the greatest part of the night along with him, his residence not being very far off. Continuing this way of life, the husband began to perceive that, whilst she encouraged him to drink in that manner, she scarcely tasted it herself, and from thence to suspect, as was really the case, that she made him drunk with a view only to her own private purposes, during the time of his being asleep. And being willing to have proof of this, he pretended once (without having drunk a drop all that day), both in his words and actions, to be the most disordered creature that could be. Which she perceiving, and thinking that he had then had a dose sufficient, and that he would sleep without any more liquor, straightway put him to bed. This was no sooner done, but she went as usual to her lover's house, where she stayed the best part of the night. Tofano finding his

wife did not come to bed, got up, and bolted the door, and then went and sat in the window to wait for her coming home, that she might see he was acquainted with her way of going on; and continued there till her return. She finding the door bolted, was exceedingly uneasy, and tried several times to force it open. Which after Tofano had suffered for some time, he said, "Madam, you give yourself trouble to no purpose, for here you shall not come; go back, if you please, for you shall enter no more within these doors, till I have shewed you that respect, which these ways of yours require, before all your relations and neighbours." She then begged, for Heaven's sake, that he would open the door, saying that she had not been where he imagined; but (as the evenings were long, and she able neither to sleep all the time, nor to sit up by herself) that she went to see a gentlewoman in the neighbourhood. But all was to no purpose, he seemed resolved that the whole town should be witnesses of their shame, when otherwise they would have known nothing of the matter.

The lady, finding her entreaties of no effect, had recourse to threats, and said "Either open the door, or I will make you the most miserable man that ever was born." Tofano replied, "And which way will you do it?" She, whose wits were sharpened by love, continued, "Before I will suffer such a disgrace, as you mean wrongfully to fasten upon me, I will throw myself directly into this well, and being found there afterwards, everybody will conclude that you did it in one of your drunken fits; whence it must unavoidably happen, that you be either obliged to fly your country, and lose all your effects; or else that you be put to death, as having murdered your wife." This, however, had no effect upon him; when she said, "I can no longer bear all your scorn, God forgive

you for being the cause of my death!" and the night being so dark that they could scarcely see one another, she ran towards the well, and taking up a great stone that lay by the well-side, and crying aloud, "God forgive this act of mine!" she let it fall into the well. The stone made a great noise when it came to the water, which Tofano hearing, firmly believed that she had thrown herself in, and taking the rope and bucket, he ran out to help her. But she, who stood concealed by the side of the door, seeing him go towards the well, got into the house, and made all fast, whilst she went to the window, and began to say to him, "Why, husband, you should use water whilst you are drinking, and not after you have made yourself drunk." Tofano, seeing her laugh at him, returned, and finding the door bolted, begged of her to open it. But she now changed her note, and began to cry out, "You drunken, sorry, troublesome wretch! You shall not come in here to-night; I can no longer bear with your evil practices; I will let all the world know what sort of a person you are, and what hours you keep." Tofano, on the other part, being grievously provoked, used all the bad language he could think of, and made a most terrible mutiny. Upon which the neighbours were all raised out of their beds; and coming to their windows, inquired what was the matter. When she began to lament and say, "It is this wicked man, who is coming home drunk at all hours of the night, which, having endured a long time, and said a great deal to no purpose, I was now willing to try if I could not shame him out of it by locking him out." Tofano, on the contrary, told them how the matter was; and threatened her very much. She then said to the neighbours, "Now you see what sort of a man he is: what would you say if I were in the street, and he within doors, as I am? Then you might think he was in the right.

Take notice, I beseech you, how artful he is; he says I have done that which he seems to have done himself, and talks something about the well; but I wish he was in it, that he might have some water as well as wine." The neighbours all joined in blaming Tofano, deeming him the person in fault, and giving him many hard words for his usage of his wife; and the thing was noised about the city, till her relations heard of it, who came thither in a body; and inquiring of one neighbour and another neighbour how it was, they took Tofano and beat him very severely. Afterwards they went into the house, and carried the lady away with them, with all that was hers, threatening Tofano with farther punishment. Whilst he, finding the ill effects of his jealousy; and still having a regard for his wife, got some friends to intercede with her to come home again, promising never more to be jealous, and giving her leave for the future to do as she would. Thus, like a simple knave, he was glad to purchase peace, after having been to the last degree injured.

NOVEL V

A jealous man confesses his wife under a priest's habit, who tells him that she is visited every night by a friar: and, whilst he is watching the door, she lets her lover in at the house-top.

LAURETTA having made an end, the king, without loss of time, pointed to Flammetta, who began in this manner:—

The preceding novel brings to my mind the story of another jealous person; being of opinion myself that those husbands are justly served in that manner, who are jealous without reason. And if legislators, when they make their laws, could be supposed to think of everything, I imagine they would decree no other punishment than what is ordered in cases of self-defence, for those jealous people are the

death frequently of their wives. All the week long are they kept mewed up in their houses, and when holidays come that they should have some ease and diversion, as all other people, according to the laws both of God and man, have then rest, yet on those are they more confined than any other time; so that none are so wretchedly enslaved as themselves. Therefore I conclude that a trick put upon a husband, who was jealous without any reason, will by you be rather commended than blamed.

There lived in Ariminio a certain rich merchant, who had an agreeable woman for his wife, of whom he was immoderately jealous, and for no other reason in the world, but that as he was very fond of her himself, and knew that it was her whole study to please him, so he imagined everyone else would like her as well, and that she would be as desirous to oblige them, which showed him to be one of a wicked disposition, as well as of little understanding. He consequently kept so strict an eye over her always, that no felon under sentence of death could be more narrowly watched. Whilst she, so far from going out to feasts at any time, or to church, or out of door, under any pretence whatever, was not suffered to look out of the window; so that she led a most wretched life, and so much the worse, as she knew herself to be innocent. Thus, finding herself so wrongfully treated, she resolved, for the time to come, to give him some reason for such usage. And as she had no opportunity of seeing people in the street, and knowing that there was an agreeable young man lived in the next house, she looked about to see if there was any chink in the wall, whereby she might have an opportunity of speaking to him, to make him an offer of her love, and to have him come to her sometimes, if such a thing could be contrived, in order to spend her life with a little more comfort, till her husband should be

cured of his jealousy. At last, in a corner of the room, she espied a crack which looked into a chamber of the next house, and she said to herself, "Now if this should prove Philippo's chamber," for that was the young gentleman's name, "my scheme would be half accomplished;" of this she ordered her maid to inform herself, who soon found out that he lay there all alone. Visiting then that place pretty often, and putting little sticks and straws through into the chamber, he soon perceived it, and came thither to see what it meant. She then called to him, and he answered, knowing her voice, when she soon made her mind known to him, which was entirely to his good liking; and he endeavoured to enlarge the opening on his side, taking care all the time that nobody should perceive it. From that time they frequently conferred together, and could shake hands, but no more, because of the husband's extraordinary care and jealousy. Now Christmas-day drawing near, she said to her husband, that, with his leave, she would go to church that day, to confess and receive the sacrament, like other good Christians. He replied, "And pray what sins can you have committed, that you want to confess?"—"What!" quoth she, "do you take me for a saint? Though you keep me shut up in this manner, yet I must sin as well as other people; but I have no occasion to tell you, as you are no priest." These words occasioned such a strong suspicion in him, that he was resolved to know what those sins were; and having determined what means to use, he told her he was willing, but that she should go only to their chapel, and that betimes in the morning, and confess to their chaplain, or some person that he should appoint, and to no other, and return from thence directly home. The lady seemed partly to know his design, and, without making any other reply, said she would do so.

On Christmas-day, then, in the morning, she arose betimes, and went to the chapel, as her husband directed her. He also went to the same place, getting there first, and having agreed with the priest what to do, he put on a gown, with a great hood almost to cover his face, as we see priests wear sometimes, and drawing it forwards over his eyes, he placed himself down in the choir. The lady, upon her coming into the chapel, inquired for the priest; who, hearing from her that she wanted to confess, told her that he could not stop to hear her himself, but would send one of his brethren. Accordingly he sent the jealous husband, in an ill hour for him as it happened, who had not so well disguised himself but she immediately knew him, and said to herself, "Thank Heaven, from a jealous fool he is become a priest; but I will take care to give him what he seeks for." Seeming then not to know him, she sat down at his feet. Now he had put some little stones into his mouth, to alter his voice, thinking himself well enough disguised as to everything else. Coming then to the confession, amongst other things, she told him, that, being married, she was yet in love with a priest, who came and lay with her every night. This struck him to the very heart, and were it not that he was desirous of learning something farther, he had gone away, and left her that moment. So he said to her, "Well, but how is it? And does not your husband lie with you?" "Yes, sir," she replied. "Then," continued he, "how can the priest lie with you at the same time?" "I know not how he does it," quoth she, "but there is not a door in the house but opens upon his touching it; he tells me also, that, upon coming to our chamber, before he opens the door, he says some certain words, which throw my husband asleep, and then he comes in, and lies with me, and the other never knows it." "O, Madam," quoth he,

"that is a very bad thing; you must leave off such practices entirely." "Ah, father," answered she, "I know not how to do it. I love him so well." "Then," continued he, "I can give you no absolution." "I am sorry for that," she replied, "but I came here to speak the truth; if I could leave them off, I would tell you so." "I am sorry for you," quoth he, "as I see your soul is in a state of damnation; but I will offer up my particular prayers for you, which may be of service, and I will send a person to you at certain times, when you may inform him if you think you have received any benefit, and in that case we will proceed farther." The lady replied, "Sir, never think of sending anybody to our house, for my husband is so unreasonably jealous, that all the world could never beat it out of his head but that he came with a bad intent, and I should not have one good day for this twelvemonth." "Madam," quoth he, "have you no care for that, for I shall manage in such a manner that you will hear no more from him upon that score." "If you can do that," she replied, "I am content." And having made an end of her confession, and received penance, she got up, and went to mass. The husband, fit to burst with fury, put off the priest's habit, and went home, waiting to find the priest and his wife together, in order to wreak his vengeance upon both; whilst she went out of the church, seeing plainly by his looks that she had given him but a bad Christmas-box, though he endeavoured to conceal both what he had done and meant farther to do.

Resolving then to wait the next night at the door for the priest, he said, "I shall go out to sup, and stay all night; be sure, therefore, you lock the door to the street, and that upon the stairs, as also your chamber-door, and when you are disposed you may go to bed." She wished

him a good night, and went immediately to the chink in the chamber, and made the usual sign, when Philippo came to her, and she told him what she had done that morning, and what her husband had said afterwards, adding, "I am confident he will never stir from the door all night long; do you contrive a way, then, to come in at the top of the house." He replied, full of joy, "Depend upon it, madam, I will." When night came, therefore, the jealous husband armed himself privately, and lay concealed in a ground-room, whilst she made the doors fast, especially that upon the stairs: and the young man, when he thought it a proper time, came by a secret way into her chamber.

The husband, in the meantime, continued supperless all night long, uneasy to the last degree, and almost starved to death with cold, waiting by the door for the priest. Day appearing at last and nobody coming, he composed himself there to sleep. Rising at the third hour, and the door of the house being now opened, he came in, pretending to come from another place, and called for his breakfast. Soon afterwards he sent a messenger to her, as from the priest who confessed her, to know if that person had come to her since. She, who understood full well the nature of the message, replied, "No, he did not come that night," and that if he left off visiting her she might forget him, although she had no desire to do so.

What more need I say? The husband continued to watch every night, and they were together all the time. At last, being out of all manner of patience, he demanded of her, with the utmost wrath in his looks, what it was that she had confessed to the priest? But she refused to tell him, saying that it was neither just nor reasonable. He added, "Thou vile woman, I know, in spite of thee, what it was, and I will make thee confess who this priest

is that lies with thee every night, by virtue of his enchantments, or else I will cut thy throat." She replied, "It is false; I never lay with any priest." "What," said he, "did you not say so and so to the priest who confessed you?" "Not," she replied, "for him to tell you again; but if you were present, it is a different thing: then, to be plain with you, I did say so." "Now tell me," quoth he, "who this priest is, and quickly." She smiled, and said, "I am always glad to see a wise man led (by the horns as it were) by a simple woman; though you deserve not that character, since you have suffered yourself to be transported by that unreasonable fit of jealousy, without knowing why; therefore the more weak you are the less is my glory. Do you think my eyes are as bad as your understanding? No; I knew very well who the priest that confessed me was, and that it was you. But I was resolved to give you what you wanted, and I think I have done so. But if you were as wise as you would be thought, you would never have desired to come at your wife's secrets in that manner, and would have known, without any vain suspicion, that every word was true which I said, and without the least crime or offence. I told you I loved a priest: were not you, my unworthy husband, then a priest? I said, no door could be kept shut when he had a mind to come to me: and is not that literally true? I added that the priest lay with me every night. And pray when did you lie from me? And when you sent to know if he was with me that night I answered he was not. Who but a person blinded with jealousy like yourself, but must have understood these things? And yet you kept watch all night at the door, and would have made me believe that you were gone elsewhere to sup and spend the night. Consider a little better and behave like a man, nor expose yourself any longer to me, who am

acquainted with all your ways; but leave off this extraordinary care upon my account; for, I assure you, were I disposed to be what you suspect, had you a hundred eyes, whereas you have only two, I could do it over and over, and you be never the wiser."

The poor jealous creature, who had thought himself cunning before, now saw how he was despised, and, without more words, divested himself of that foolish and troublesome disposition; esteeming his wife for the time to come as a virtuous and prudent woman. And she had no farther occasion to make her lover come in at the top of the house, as cats do; for the door was open afterwards whenever they had a mind to be together.

NOVEL VI

Isabella, being in company with her gallant, called Leonetto, and being visited at the same time by one Lambertuccio, her husband returns, when she sends Lambertuccio away with a drawn sword in his hand, whilst the husband guards Leonetto safe to his own house.

THEY were all pleased with Flammetta's story, declaring that the woman had served the brute exactly right. And it being concluded, the king ordered Pampinea to go on, who then said:—

There are many people so foolish as to affirm that love deprives persons of their understanding, and that they who are in love are out of their wits. But how ridiculous this assertion is will appear by what has been said before, and also by what I am going now to tell you.

In our city, abounding with everything that is good, there was formerly a beautiful lady, wife to a certain worthy knight, who desiring, as it will sometimes happen, a little variety, began to grow indifferent towards her husband, casting her eye upon a certain young spark called

Leonetto, one of no great family, but agreeable enough; he likewise began to show the same good liking towards her, and it was not long before their wishes were accomplished. Now it happened that another gentleman was in love with her also, called Lambertuccio, one by no means agreeable to her; but he ceased not to solicit her by all manner of ways, threatening at the same time, as he was a man of note and power, to lessen and expose her, unless she would comply with his desires. This terrified her so much that she thought herself obliged to listen to him. And being now, as it was summer-time, at one of their country houses, and her husband being gone from home to make some stay, she sent for Leonetto to come and be with her in the meantime. He obeyed her summons with great pleasure. Lambertuccio, knowing also that her husband was abroad, came all alone on horseback, and knocked at the gate. Her maid, seeing him there, ran upstairs to her mistress, who was in her chamber with Leonetto, and said, "Madam, Signor Lambertuccio is here below." The lady was under the greatest concern imaginable, and desired Leonetto not to mind stepping behind the curtain of the bed till the other was gone. Leonetto, who feared him as much as she did, went and hid himself there, whilst she ordered her maid to go and let Lambertuccio in, who being dismounted, and hanging his horse at the door, was immediately shewed upstairs; when she meeting him at the top, asked, with a smile in her countenance, how she came to be favoured with the visit. "My life!" quoth he, "I understood your husband was abroad, and it was for that reason I came to see you." He had not been long with her before her husband, contrary to her expectation, returned. As soon as the maid saw him, she came suddenly into the chamber, and said to her mistress, "Madam, my master is returned, and now in the

court.' The lady was quite confounded at hearing this, and considering that she had two men in the house, and that the knight could not be concealed on account of his horse, gave herself up for lost; yet, resolving at length what to do, she said to Lambertuccio, 'Sir, if you have any regard for me, and are willing to save me from destruction, pray do as I shall direct you. Go downstairs with an angry countenance, and your sword in your hand, saying, 'I vow to Heaven if ever I meet with him anywhere else.' And if my husband should offer to stop you, or ask any questions, say nothing more than that; but mount your horse directly and ride away, nor offer to stay with him upon any account whatever.' Accordingly he obeyed her directions, whilst the husband was wondering to see the horse there, and coming upstairs he was further surprised at Lambertuccio's fierce countenance, and hearing him talk in that manner; and he said to him, 'Pray, what is the matter, sir?' The other put his foot in the stirrup, and muttered only these words, 'If ever I meet the villain again—,' and so rode away. The knight, going upstairs, found his wife at the stairhead, terrified out of her wits, and he said to her, 'What is the reason of Lambertuccio's going away in so much heat and fury?' When she drawing nearer to her chamber that Leonetto might hear, replied, 'My dear, I never was so frightened in my whole life. A gentleman whom I never saw before, ran in here, and Lambertuccio after him with a drawn sword, and finding the chamber-door open he came trembling into it, saying, 'I beg, madam, you will protect me, otherwise I shall be murdered in your very presence.' I arose and was going to ask him who he was, and what was the reason, when Lambertuccio was at the top of the stairs roaring out, 'Where is the villain?' Upon this I ran to the chamber door, and stopped him as he was just

coming in, when he was so civil to me, indeed, after he saw I was unwilling he should come into the chamber, that, after a few words, he went back again just as you met him." The husband then said, "My dear, you did well; it would have been a great discredit to us to have had anybody murdered in our house; and Lambertuccio was highly to blame to pursue a person hither. But," quoth he, "where is the gentleman?" She replied, "He is hid somewhere or other; I know not where." "Where are you?" quoth the knight, "you may come out without any danger." Leonetto, who heard all that passed, came from where he was concealed much terrified, as indeed he had no reason; when the knight said to him, "Pray what affair is this that you have had with Lambertuccio?"—"Nothing," he replied, "in the world that I know of; so that I am convinced he has either lost his senses, or else mistakes me for some other person; for, upon seeing me in the street, at a distance from your house, he drew his sword, and said, 'Villain, thou art a dead man!' I stayed to ask no questions, but made the best of my way, and came hither, where, thanks be to Heaven and this lady, I have found protection." "Then," said the knight, "be under no fear; I will see you safe home, when you may make inquiry what the ground of his quarrel with you is." After supper, then, he mounted him upon one of his horses, and conducted him to Florence to his own house. And that night, by the lady's direction, he had a private conference with Lambertuccio, when they so planned it that though there was much talk afterwards about it, the husband never knew the truth of his wife's stratagem.

NOVEL VII

Lodovico being in love with Beatrice, she sends her husband into the garden, disguised like herself, so that her lover may be with her in the meantime; and he afterwards goes into the garden, and beats him.

ISABELLA'S quick and lucky thought was admired by the whole company, when Philomena began, by the king's command, to this effect:—You must understand, that at Paris dwelt a certain gentleman, a Florentine, who, being a little reduced, was forced to go into trade, by which means he acquired a great deal of wealth. He had only one son, named Lodovico, who having regard to the nobility of his father, more than to anything of business, was, instead of being brought up in a warehouse, sent, with some other young noblemen, into the service of the King of France, where he acquired all the accomplishments that belong to a fine gentleman. And being one day in company with certain knights, who were just returned from the Holy Land, and talking of beauties in England, France, and other countries, one of them declared, that, in all parts of the world, of all the women that ever he saw, he never met with any to come up to Beatrice, the wife of Egano de' Galluzzi, of Bologna; to which his companions, who had been with him there, agreed. Lodovico, at hearing this, was possessed with such a desire of seeing her, that he could think of nothing else; and designing to go and make some stay there, if she proved to his liking, he pretended to his father that he had an inclination to go to the Holy Land, who gave his consent with great reluctance. Changing his name then to Anichino, he came to Bologna; and as fortune would have it, saw her at her window the very next day, when he found her beauty to exceed even his warmest

imagination; and, being quite enamoured, he resolved not to depart from Bologna till he had obtained his desire. Thinking, therefore, which was the most likely way to succeed, he supposed, that if he could but get to be a servant to the husband, he might probably carry his point. Accordingly he sold his horses, and, disposing of his servants, with orders never to take notice of him, he told his landlord that he should be glad to get into the service of some person of distinction, if such a place could be met with. The landlord replied, "You are just such a person as would suit a gentleman here, called Egano, who has a great number of servants, and will always have well-looking genteel people about him, like yourself: I will speak to him for you." This he did, and Anichino was immediately taken into the family, greatly to his satisfaction. Continuing then with Egano, where he had daily opportunities of seeing the lady, he gained so far upon him, by his good behaviour that he could do nothing without him; and he made him sole director of all his affairs. When one day it happened, as Egano was gone out a fowling, and left him behind, that Beatrice (who as yet knew nothing of his love, but had always commended his most engaging behaviour) made him sit down with her at chess, and Anichino, as it was his whole desire to please her, contrived to let her win, with which she was vastly delighted.

At length, all the women being gone out of the room, and they left by themselves, he fetched a deep sigh. She looked, and said, "What is the matter with you, Anichino? Are you uneasy because I win?" "Madam," he replied, "it is a thing of more consequence which occasioned that sigh."—"Then by the regard you have for me," quoth she, "I conjure you to tell me." When Anichino saw himself entreated by his love for her, whom he valued

beyond all the world, he gave a greater sigh than before. She desired again to know the reason. Whilst he replied, "Madam, I am extremely afraid lest I should disoblige you by so doing; I doubt also if you would not speak of it to some other person." She made answer, "Be assured I shall not be disengaged; nor shall I ever speak of it again, unless you give me leave."—"Then," quoth he, "as I have your promise, I will reveal it." And he told her, with tears in his eyes, who he was; what he had heard of her, and where; and how he came to be servant to her husband, and entreated her, in the most humble manner, to have pity on him, and accept of the secret offer of his love; or, if that was too great a favour for him to expect, that he might continue in the same condition as before; and that she would be pleased only to let him admire her. O! how singularly sweet are these Bolognian dispositions! In cases of this sort how worthy of praise! They delight not in people's tears and sighs; but to soft amorous entreaties, are ever easy of access. Were I able to give them their due praise, my voice should never faint on so agreeable a subject. The lady had her eyes fixed upon him all the time he was speaking, and giving entire credit to his words, she began to conceive the same passion in her heart for him; whilst she replied, "Anichino, have a good heart; you have effected that in a moment (the small time only that you have been speaking), which all the lords and gentlemen, who have been daily soliciting me, could never bring to pass; so that now I am more yours than my own. You have deserved my love, and you shall have it; come, therefore, to my chamber about midnight." Upon this they parted, and he waited with great impatience for night. Egano was now returned from fowling, and, being weary, went, as soon he had supped, to bed, and the lady with him,

leaving the door open, as she had promised. At the time appointed, Anichino went into the bed-chamber, and shutting the door again, he stepped gently to the lady's side of the bed when, laying his hand upon her breast, he found she was awake. Accordingly she seized it with both hers, and held him strongly, turning herself in bed at the same time, till she made her husband awake, when she said to him, "My dear, I would say nothing to you last night, because you seemed to be weary: but tell me, which of your servants do you believe to be the most faithful, and whom you respect the most?" Egano replied, "What a strange question this is! Do not you know that I never loved and put such confidence in any servant, as I now do in Anichino? But why want you to be informed?" Anichino, perceiving Egano to be awake, and hearing them talk together, endeavoured several times to have drawn his hand away, with a design of leaving the room, imagining that she had put a trick upon him; but she held him so fast that he could not. She then replied to Egano, saying, "I will tell you: I once thought as you do, and that he was the most trusty person about you, but I was mistaken; for he had the assurance, after you were gone out yesterday, to make an offer of his love to me; whilst I, to give you manifest proof of it, seemed to consent, and appointed to meet him this night under the pine-tree, in the garden. Now my intention was never to go thither; but if you have a mind to be convinced of his villany, you need only slip on one of my petticoats, and put a veil over your head, and I am sure you will find him."—"Then," quoth he, "most certainly will I go." Arising, therefore, and disguising himself in that manner, as well as he could in the dark, he went into the garden to wait for Anichino. As soon as he was gone out she arose also, and made fast the door. Whilst

Anichino, who had been under the greatest fears imaginable, and had endeavoured all he could to get from her, cursing both her and her love a thousand times over; and himself likewise, for giving credit to her; finding out what was her design at last, was the happiest man imaginable. At length, when she thought he had been as long with her as it was safe for him to stay, she said, "I beg of you to take a cudgel, and go into the garden; and, pretending as if this was done only to make trial of my virtue, do you give him some hard language, as though it was myself, and cane him soundly." Accordingly he arose, and took a good stick with him thither; whilst Egano, seeing him come towards the pine-tree, went with a great deal of seeming pleasure to meet him. When Anichino said, "What! you wicked woman, are you come? And could you think I could do such a thing by my master? I will make you repent your baseness." And lifting up his cudgel, he laid on to some purpose. Egano, at these words, and feeling the blows, took to his heels, without speaking a word, whilst Anichino was close after him, crying out, "Away, you vile creature! and depend upon it that my master shall know to-morrow." Egano having sustained all this drubbing, returned at last to his chamber, when the lady said to him, "Well! did Anichino come into the garden?" Egano replied, "Would to God he had stayed away! for, besides all the foul language that could be used to any woman, he has broken almost all the bones in my skin. I wondered indeed that he should use those rude expressions, if he had such an intention as I supposed him to have, towards you. But, as he saw you of such a free, cheerful temper, he had a mind to make trial of you, I suppose."—"Then thank Heaven," quoth she, "he proved me with words and you with deeds. But, I believe, he may say that I bore the words

better than you did the deeds: as he has shewed himself so faithful, therefore, to you, you will regard him accordingly."—"Most certainly," said Egano: and from that time he concluded that he had the most virtuous wife and honestest servant of any man in the world. On which account (though Anichino and she often laughed together at the thing) they had an opportunity of gratifying their desires with the less suspicion (which could not have been done so well without such a stratagem) all the time Anichino thought fit to stay with Egano at Bologno.

NOVEL VIII

A woman who had a very jealous husband, tied a thread to her great toe, by which she informed her lover whether he should come or not. The husband found it out, and whilst he was pursuing the lover, she put her maid in her place. He takes her to be his wife, beats her, cuts off her hair, and then fetches his wife's relations who find nothing of what he had told them, and so load him with reproaches.

BEATRICE seemed to them all to have been strangely spiteful towards her husband; and everyone agreed that Anichino's fright and confusion must be very great to be held in that manner, whilst she told her husband of his design upon her. The king now seeing that Philomen had done, turned to Neiphile, and said, "Do you speak?" Neiphile smiled and replied:—

A great charge at present rests upon me, to relate something equal to what has been said already; but I shall endeavour to acquit myself as well as I can.

Know, then, that in our city lived a certain rich merchant named Arriguccio Berlinghieri, who, like many of our trades people now-a-days, foolishly thought to ennable himself by marriage; and he took a wife, not a

all suitable to himself, whose name was Sismonda. She (her husband, like other persons of business, being often abroad) fell in love with a young gentleman called Ruberto, who had long paid his addresses to her, and being not so discreet in that affair as she ought to have been, it happened whether her husband had any notion of it, or for what other reason I cannot tell, that he became the most jealous creature in the world, and laying aside all his other concerns, he applied his mind wholly to the care of her: nor would he ever go to sleep without seeing her first in bed. This was the greatest affliction to her, as it deprived her of all opportunity of being with her gallant: therefore, after much thinking about it, and being greatly importuned by him all the time, it came into her head at last to take the following method: namely, as her chamber was towards the street and she knowing that, though her husband was long sometimes before he went to rest, yet that when he was once fast he was not easily stirred; she meant to have her lover come to the door in the middle of the night, and to go and let him in whilst her husband was asleep. And that she might know when he was there and nobody else perceive it, she resolved to put a thread out of the window, one end of which should go near to the ground, and the other end was to be brought low along the floor, and so under the clothes into the bed; which when she went to bed she would tie to her great toe. Having acquainted Ruberto with this, she told him, that, as often as he came, he should pull the thread, when, if her husband was asleep, she would let it go: but, if he was not asleep, she would hold it fast, and then he was not to expect her. Ruberto liked this scheme mighty well, and he was frequently coming thither, when sometimes he could have her company, and sometimes not. Till at last, carrying on this device in the same manner,

it happened, whilst she was asleep, as the husband was stretching out his feet in the bed, that he met with this thread; when putting down his hand and finding it tied to her toe, he thought within himself there must be some trick here: perceiving afterwards that the other end went out of the window he held it for granted; accordingly he took it off her toe and put it upon his own, waiting to see what the event would be. He had not been long expecting before Ruberto came, and pulled the thread as usual: Arriguccio perceived it, and not having tied the thread fast enough, the other drawing pretty strong, it came into his hand, which he supposed was for him to stay, and so he did. Arriguccio upon this arose with all haste, and taking arms with him, he went to the door, to see who it was, and to take vengeance on him. Now, though he was a merchant, he was a stout, warlike man; and being come to the door, and not opening it in the manner the lady used to do, Ruberto began to have a suspicion how it was, and immediately took to his heels, and the other after him. At last Ruberto having run a great way and the other still pursuing him, he faced about (as he was armed likewise) and drew his sword, whilst the one continued pushing, as the other stood upon his defence. The lady awoke the moment her husband opened the chamber-door, and finding the thread gone from her toe, concluded she was discovered. And perceiving that he had run after her lover, she arose, resolving what to do; and calling her maid (who was in the secret) she prevailed upon her to go into her bed; begging of her to receive all the blows patiently which her master should give, without making any discovery; and she would make her such a recompence, that she should have no cause to repent. Putting out the light then which was in the chamber, she went and hid herself in a corner of the house, waiting for the event.

The fray between Arriguccio and Ruberto had alarmed all the neighbours, who arose and began to reprove them very severely: on which Arriguccio, without knowing who his antagonist was, or being able to do him any harm, left him (for fear of being known himself), and returned full of wrath to his own house. And coming into the chamber, he said, "Where is this vile woman? What! she has put out the candle that I should not find her; but she shall be mistaken. So he went to the bedside, and began to beat and kick the maid (thinking it was his wife), till he was quite weary, and what with his hands and feet together, had bruised her face to a mummy. When he had done that, he cut off her hair, saying all the reproachful things that could be spoken to a woman. The girl roared out very much (as indeed she had reason); and though she would frequently say, "For God's sake have mercy!" and nothing more, yet her words were so broken with lamentations, and he so blinded too with fury, that he never discovered her not to be his wife. Having beat her then to some purpose, and cut off her hair (as we observed), he said, "Thou vile prostitute, I shall meddle with thee no farther, but will go for thy brothers, to let them know of thy exploits, when they may do as they shall think most for their own credit, and take thee away with them; for here thou shalt no longer abide;" so he locked her in, and went away by himself.

As soon as Sismonda (who had heard the whole transaction) perceived he was gone, she came into the chamber, and struck a light, when she found the girl all bruised, and in tears. And having comforted her in the best manner she was able, she removed her to her own apartment, where she was well taken care of: and rewarding her, at Arriguccio's expense, to her own content, she went immediately and set her room to rights; making the bed

over again, as if nobody had lain in it that night; and she lighted up the lamp, and dressed herself as if she had never been in bed. Then taking up her work, she sat herself down at the top of the stairs, and began to sew. Arriguccio in the meantime went with all possible haste to her brothers' house, and knocked there till he made them hear and open the door. When the brothers (who were three) and the mother all arose, hearing it was he; and seeing him come alone, at that time of night, they inquired the reason. Whereupon he related the whole affair, beginning with the thread, and going on to what he had done afterwards, and at length, by way of ~~eon~~ conviction, shewed them the hair which he had cut off; adding, that, in regard to their own honour, they might take her away, and dispose of her as they pleased, for that he would be no longer troubled with her. The brothers were greatly offended at hearing this story, and in ~~their~~ fury ordered torches to be got ready, preparing to go back with him, that she might not want her due treatment; whilst the mother went heavily after, sometimes entreating one, and sometimes another of them, not to be too hasty in condemning their sister; alleging that he might have quarrelled with her upon some other account, and now brought this by way of excuse; adding, that she wondered how it could be; seeing that she well knew her daughter, having brought her up herself; with more words to that effect. Being now at the house, and going up stairs, Sismonda called out to them, and said, "Who is there?" When one of her brothers replied, "You shall soon know, you vile creature as you are!" "Lord have mercy on me!" said she, "what is all this for?" And rising up, she went, saying "Brothers, you are welcome; but what is the meaning of your coming all three at this time of the night?" They, observing that she had been sitting at

work, and without any such bruises or blows as the husband had talked of, began to wonder; and, abating a little of their former wrath, they inquired the meaning of this difference with her husband, threatening her severely if she spoke anything but the truth. The lady replied, "I know not what you would have me say, nor of any quarrel that I have had with him." Arriguccio at beholding her, was like one confounded, remembering that he had scratched and beat her in a most outrageous manner, of which no sign now appeared; and her brothers then told her what they had heard from him. She now turned to him, and said, "Alas! my dear, what is this I hear! and why would you have me thought to be a wicked person, to your great disgrace, when I am not so; and yourself an ill-tempered sorry man, when it is quite otherwise? When were you here to-night before now? Or when did you beat me? For my part, I know nothing of the matter." Arriguccio replied, "You abominable wretch! what, did we not go to bed together? Did I not return hither again, after pursuing your gallant? Did I not give you a thousand blows at the same time that I cut off your hair?"

She made answer, "You never went to bed in this house to-night: but, letting this alone, for which you can have only my word, and to come to what you talk of, namely, of your beating me and cutting off my hair, let any one see if I have such bruises upon me; nor should I advise you to attempt ever to serve me so; for, as I hope to be saved. I would return the like, if you did. And, as to cutting off my hair, I never knew anything of it if it was so; but let us see whether it be as you say, or not." She then pulled her veil off, and shewed her hair all entire, and in order. The brothers and the mother seeing this, said to him. "How now, sir! Surely

this can never be the thing that you came to acquaint us with; which way will you prove the rest?" Arriguccio was like one out of his wits. Gladly would he have said something, but seeing the thing appear differently from what he had undertaken to shew them, he could not get out one word. She now said to her brothers, "I see he has a mind I should relate to you his vile proceedings, and my own unhappiness, and I will do it. I believe firmly that what he says may be true, and I'll tell you which way. This sorry fellow, to whom you gave me in an ill hour, who calls himself a merchant truly, and would be thought such, and who therefore should be as temperate as a hermit, and as modest as a maid; this man, I say, is drunk most nights in one tavern or other; one while with one prostitute, and then again with another whilst I am forced to sit up for him, in the manner you now found me, till midnight for the most part, and often till morning. And being very drunk, he might find a thread tied to the toe of one of those strumpets, and run after some person or other, and fight him, as he says; and returning back, he might beat her in that manner, and cut off her hair: and not being thoroughly sober again, he imagines it was done to me; if you observe, he appears now to be half fuddled: therefore I would have you consider him as a person in liquor, and forgive him even as I mean to do."

The mother, at these words, made a great clamour, and said, "My dear child, it shall never be; he deserves hanging, for an ill-conditioned bruit as he is. He is unworthy of such a woman as you are. What could he have done more, had he catched you in the open street? Things are come to a fine pass truly, if you must be set down by the words of a little paltry merchant. This sort of fellows, you must know, if they have but a

little money in their pockets, are all for a gentleman's daughter; when they pretend to some coat of arms, and say, 'I am of such a family, and my ancestors did so and so.' Would to heaven my sons had followed my advice! Count Guido would gladly have taken you without a penny of fortune; yet they chose to marry you to this jewel here: and though there is not a better gentlewoman nor one more virtuous in Florence, yet he was not ashamed to call you strumpet, as if we were strangers to your character. But, as I hope to live, were they ruled by me, they would beat him to a mummy." Turning now to her sons, she said, "I told you, as we came along, that it could never be true. You hear how this fine brother of yours uses your sister: a poor sorry fellow as he is! were I in your place, hearing what he has both said and done towards her, I would never leave him with life.—Confound him! for a drunken, quarrelsome villain, to have no shame in him!" Here the brothers said all the severe things they could think of; concluding at last with saying, "We forgive you this once, as you were drunk, but take care we hear no more such stories; if we do, we will pay off all your old scores," and so they left him. Arriguccio stood like one who had lost his senses, scarcely knowing whether all this was real, or only a dream, and from that time quarrelled no more with his wife; whilst she not only escaped from the most imminent danger, but opened a way to obtain her desires, without the least fear of her husband for the time to come.

NOVEL IX

Lydia, the wife of Nicostratus, being in love with Pyrrhus, did three things which he had enjoined her, to convince him of her affection. She afterwards used some familiarities with him before her husband's face, making him believe that what he had seen was not real.

NEIPHILE's novel had pleased them all to that degree, that they could not keep from laughing and talking about it, although the king had several times called out silence, in order that Pamphilus should speak; who at length began in this manner:—There is nothing, I am persuaded, so dangerous and difficult, that a person who is thoroughly in love will not attempt; which, though it has been shewed by various instances already given, yet I think will be still more apparent from a story which I am going to tell you, of a lady much more fortunate than wise. Therefore I would advise no one to run the risk of following her paths; because neither is fortune always disposed, nor are all men to be blinded in the same manner.

In Argos, an ancient city of Achaia, more famous formerly for its kings than great, lived a certain nobleman called Nicostratus, to whom fortune, in the decline of his life, had given a young lady for his wife, of as great a spirit as she was beautiful, named Lydia. Now he, being a lord of a large estate, kept a great number of servants, dogs, and hawks, and was very fond of country diversions. Amongst his other servants was a genteel young man named Pyrrhus, whom he valued and trusted above all the rest. With this person she was so much in love, that she could never be happy but in his company; whilst he (whether he did not, or would not perceive her regard for him), seemed not at all affected by it. This she laid much to heart, and resolving to make him understand her, she called one of her favourite

maids, whose name was Lusca, and said to her, "Lusca, the favours you have received from me, should make you both obedient and faithful; take care, therefore, that you reveal what I am going to speak to no one, save to the person concerned. You see what a great disproportion there is between my husband's age and mine, and may suppose I can have but little comfort with such an one; for that reason I have made choice of our Pyrrhus. If you have any regard for me, then, let him know my love for him in the best manner you are able; and entreat him, on my part, that he would please to come hither to me." The girl promised to do so; and, on the very first opportunity, she took Pyrrhus aside, and delivered her message. This surprised him very much, as not having the least notion of such a thing; and being apprehensive that it might be done to try him, he answered roughly, "Lusca, I can never think this comes from fny lady; then take care what you say: or, if she did say so, you could never have her orders to disclose it; or, even admitting that, still I have that regard for my lord, that I could never offer to do him such an injury: I charge you, then, let me hear no more about it." Lusca, not at all abashed at his stern way of speaking replied, "Pyrrhus, I shall speak at all times what I am ordered by my lady to say, whether it offends you or not; but, for your part, you are not better than a brute." And she returned full of wrath to her mistress, who was fit to die on hearing it; and in a few days she said again, "You know, Lusca, that one stroke never fells an' oak; then go once more, and tell him that his fidelity is at my expense; represent the passion I have for him in such a manner that he may be affected with it: for, if he continues so indifferent, it will go near to cost me my life." The girl desired her to take courage;

and going again to Pyrrhus, and finding him in good humour, she said, "I told you, a few days ago, of the great regard my lady had for you; and I now assure you, that, if you continue in the same resolution, she will never survive it: then be persuaded, or I shall think you the greatest fool in the world. What an honour will it be to have the love of such a lady! Consider how greatly you are obliged to fortune: she offers you a most beautiful woman, and a refuge from your necessities. Who will be happier than yourself, if you be wise? Do but represent to yourself whatever an ambitious heart can desire; all will be yours. Open then your understanding to my words, and remember that fortune is wont to come once in our lives to us with cheerful looks, and her lap full of favours; if we turn our backs on her at that time, we may thank ourselves should we be poor and miserable all the rest of our days. You talk of honour and fidelity; there is something indeed in that plea among friends: but, with regard to servants, in such a case, they may do just as their masters would behave to them. Can you imagine, had you a wife, daughter, or sister, that our master fancied, that he would stand on such nice terms of duty, and all that, as you now do to his wife? You can never be so foolish, but you must believe, that, if persuasion was ineffectual, he would make use of force. Let us serve them, therefore, as they would serve us; make use of fortune's kind offer in your favour: for, depend upon it, setting aside the consideration of what may happen through your refusal to the lady, if you do not, you will repent the longest day you have to live." Pyrrhus, who had made several reflections on what she had said before to him, and had resolved to make a different reply if ever she came again, being now not averse to the thing, provided he could be assured she

was in earnest, made answer, "Lusca, this is all true, I confess; but yet as my lord is a very wise and provident person, and, as I am entrusted with the management of all his affairs, I am afraid that my lady only does this to try me: three things then there are that I require of her for my own conviction, after which I will obey all her commands. The first is, that she kill my lord's favourite hawk before his face; the second, that she send me a lock of his beard; and the third, one of his soundest and best teeth." These seemed very hard conditions to the maid and more so to the mistress; but love, who is a good comforter as well as counsellor, soon made her resolve. Accordingly, she sent him word, by the same person, that all three should be done. And farther, that, as he had such an opinion of his lord's wisdom, she would also undertake to make him not believe his own eyes. Pyrrhus then waited to see what course she meant to take. In a few days, therefore, Nicostratus having prepared a great entertainment, as he used frequently to do, just as the cloth was taken away, she came into the hall richly dressed, and there, in the presence of Pyrrhus and the whole company, went to the perch where the hawk was, and unloosed him, as if she had a mind to take him upon her hand, when taking him by the jesses, she dashed his brains out against the wall. And while Nicostratus was crying out, "Alas! my dear, what have you done?" she took no notice, but turned to the people, and said, "I should scarcely revenge myself of a king that was to do me an injury, if I wanted courage to wreak myself on a paltry hawk. You must know, that this bird has deprived me of all the pleasure I should have from my husband: for, by break of day he is up, and on horseback, after his favourite diversion, whilst I am left all alone and neglected: for which reason I have long

taken a resolution to do this thing, and only waited for an opportunity to have so many equitable judges present as I take you to be."

The gentlemen, supposing her affection to Nicostratus to be as fervent as her words seem to declare, laughed heartily; and, turning to Nicostratus, who seemed a good deal disturbed, they said, "She has done very well in taking her revenge upon this hawk," and, after a little raillyery, changed his resentment into a fit of laughter. Pyrrhus upon seeing this said to himself, "She has made a noble beginning, Heaven grant that she may persevere!" The hawk being thus despatched, it was not long before she happened to be toying with her husband in the chamber, whilst he, pulling her gently by the hair, gave occasion for her to put Pyrrhus's second command in execution: when taking hold of a little lock of his beard, and laughing heartily at the same time, she pulled so hard that it brought the skin and all away together. He grew very peevish at this, and was going to quarrel with her; when she said, "You make an angry face, truly, because I plucked a hair or two off your beard; you were not sensible what I suffered when you pulled me by the hair just now." So, continuing their play from one word to another, she took care of the tuft of his beard, and sent it that very day to her lover. She was more perplexed about the last thing; but, having an enterprising genius, which was rendered more so by love, she soon resolved on what means to use to bring that about. And, as Nicostratus had two youths in his house, given him by their fathers, who were gentlemen, in order to learn good breeding, one of whom carved his victuals whilst the other filled out the wine, she made them both believe one day that their breath was very offensive; and she taught them, when they waited upon Nicostratus, to

turn their heads on one side always, but never to speak of it to any person. This they believed, and did as they were directed. One day she said to him, "Did you ever take notice of your pages' behaviour when they wait upon you?"—"Yes," said he, "I have, and have been often going to ask them the reason,"—"Then," she replied, "you may spare yourself that trouble, for I can tell you. I have kept it some time from you, for fear of disobligeing you; but, now I see other people take notice of it, I can conceal it no longer. It is then because you have a stinking breath; I know not what the cause may be, for it did not use to be so; but it is a most grievous thing, as you keep a great deal of company: therefore I would have you take some method or other to get rid of it."—"What," said Nicostratus, "can it be owing to? Have I a foul tooth in my head?" She replied, "Perhaps you have;" and, taking him to the window, she made him open his mouth, and after looking carefully in every part, she said, "O, my dear! How could you bear with it so long? Here is a tooth which seems not only rotten, but entirely consumed; and if you keep it any longer in your mouth, will certainly decay all on the same side: I advise you then to have it out before it goes any farther."—"As you think so," quoth he, "and I approve of it too, send instantly for an operator to draw it out."—"Tell me of no operator," said she; "I will never agree to that; it seems to stand in such a manner that I think I could do it myself: besides, those fellows are so barbarous upon those occasions, that my heart could never bear to have you under their hands. Therefore I will try to do it myself; and, if it gives you too much pain, I will let you go again, which those people never do." Getting now an instrument for that purpose, and sending everyone out of the room, excepting her favourite maid, she

seated him upon a stool, and laying hold of a tooth whilst the other kept him fast down, she put him to most intolerable pain, and at length drew it out by main force: then keeping the tooth, and producing a rotten one which she had ready in her hand, she said to the poor man, who was almost dead, "See here what it was you had in your mouth." And he, believing it to be so, though he had felt the most exquisite torture, and complained much of her harsh way of doing it, as it was out, thought himself cured; and having taken some good comfortable things the pain abated, and he went out of the chamber. The tooth she immediately sent to her lover, who, being now convinced of her love, held himself in readiness to obey her commands. But she, willing to give him some farther assurance, and thinking every hour an age till she could be with him, feigned herself to be very ill; and her husband coming one day after dinner to see her and nobody with him but Pyrrhus, she desired that, by way of ease to her malady, they would take her into the garden. Accordingly Nicostratus took hold of one arm and Pyrrhus the other, and leading her thither, laid her on a grass plot under a pear-tree: and sitting down by her, she, who had before instructed him what to do, said to Pyrrhus, "I have a great desire to have some of those pears; do you climb up into the tree and get me a few." Pyrrhus immediately went up, and, as he was throwing down some of the pears he began to call out, "So! what are you doing there below? Do you think I am blind? I find, madam, you are soon recovered after your fit of sickness. You had better take those liberties elsewhere." The lady turned to her husband, and said, "What is Pyrrhus talking of? He is in a dream surely." — "No, madam," quoth he, "I am in no dream. What? did you think I could not see you?" Nicostratus

wondered, and said, "Surely, Pyrrhus, you are raving." "No, sir," he replied, "I am very confident I saw you so and so together." Quoth the lady, "What can be the meaning of this? Were I well enough, I would actually go into the tree myself to behold the strange things that he talks of seeing from thence." Pyrrhus still continued in the same story, when Nicostratus desired him to come down, and asked him what it was he really saw? Pyrrhus replied, "I thought I saw you billing and cooing, which, though innocent enough between husband and wife, should never be practised in public."—"The man is out of his wits," quoth Nicostratus; "we neither of us so much as stirred from the place where we were sitting."—"Then," said Pyrrhus, "I tell you I saw it." Nicostratus was now more and more surprised, and said, "I will see whether this tree be enchanted or not:" and as he was mounting up into the tree, Pyrrhus and the lady became very loving. Nicostratus, seeing this, began to call out. "Oh! thou vile woman; what art thou doing there? and that rascal, Pyrrhus, in whom I put all my confidence?" And with these words, he made all possible haste down, when the lady and Pyrrhus both said, "We were sitting here all the time just as you left us."—However, he seemed to be in a violent passion, whilst Pyrrhus said to him, "Now, sir, I am convinced that I saw falsely myself, as yours is the same case; for I can be positive that you were mistaken. Do but reason with yourself: can it be supposed that your lady who is the most virtuous and prudent of all others, should ever attempt to do such a thing before your very face? And, for my own part, I would be cut limb from limb before I would ever entertain such a thought, much less do so in your presence."—"The fault, then, in this mistaken appearance must proceed from the tree; for all the world

could never have convinced me but that I saw you and my lady together in the same manner, if I had not heard from yourself that we appeared so to you." On this she said, with a good deal of warmth, "Do you think, were I so loosely given, that I should be such a fool as to do these things before your eyes? No, there are opportunities enough, without your being ever the wiser." Nicostratus, believing at last what they both said, came into a little better temper, and began to talk of the novelty, and wonder at the thing; whilst the lady, who seemed concerned for the ill opinion he had received concerning her, added, "Most certainly, this tree shall never occasion any more scandal either to me or any other woman, if I can help it: run, therefore, Pyrrhus, for an axe, and cut it down, in regard to us both; though the axe might be as well employed upon my husband's weak noddle for believing his own eyes in a case so repugnant both to common sense and reason." The axe was then brought and the tree cut down, upon which she said to Nicostratus, "My wrath is over now I see my honour's adversary thus demolished." And he having begged her pardon, she freely forgave him, charging him for the future ~~ever~~ to presume such a thing of her, who loved him dearer than her own life.—Thus the poor deluded husband returned with his wife and Pyrrhus into the house, where nothing now prevented the latter from accomplishing all their wishes.

NOVEL X

Two inhabitants of Siena love the same woman, one of whom was god-father to her son. This man dies, and returns, according to his promise, to his friend, and gives him an account of what is done in the other world.

THERE was only the king now left to speak; who, after

quieting the ladies, who were under some concern for the cutting down of the pear tree, began as follows:—It is a plain case, that every just prince ought himself to be tied down by the laws of his own making; and that, if he acts otherwise, he should be punished as a private person: now I am forced to fall under this very censure, for yesterday I gave you a subject for this day's discourse, with no design of making use of my privilege, but to conform with the rest, and speak to it myself. Whereas, besides taking the very story from me which I meant to have given, there has been such a variety of incidents related to the same effect, and well told, that I can think of nothing myself worth troubling you with, after them. Therefore, as I am under the necessity of transgressing against my own law, I submit to any punishment you shall please to inflict upon me. So, having recourse to my privilege at last, I shall relate a short novel; which, though it contains some things which we are not to credit, may not be disagreeable for you to hear.

There were, some time since, two young men of Siena, the one named Tingoccio Mini, and the other Meuccio di Tura, who dwelt in the Porta Solaia, and were very intimate. They used, therefore, to go to church together, when hearing much of the pleasure and pains of a future state, and being desirous of knowing something more certain on that head, they promised each other, that whichever died first should return if it was possible to inform his friend. In the meantime, they happened both to fall in love with the lady of Ambruogio Anselmini. This, how great soever their friendship was, they kept from each other, though for different reasons. Tingoccio had been godfather to one of her children; and being in a measure ashamed of such gallantry, he concealed it from his friend. On the other part, Meuccio kept his love a

secret because he knew the other liked her as well as himself. At length Tingoccio, as he had more opportunities than his friend, happened to succeed. This was a great mortification to Meuccio, who still lived in hopes of gaining his point some time or other: and seemed, therefore, to know nothing of the matter, lest Tingoccio should thwart his designs. Some time after this, Tingoccio was taken ill, and died: and the third night afterwards, he came into Meuccio's chamber, who was fast asleep, and called aloud to him.—Meuccio awoke, and said, “What art thou?” He replied, “I am thy friend Tingoccio, who am come, according to our agreement, to bring thee tidings of the other world.” Meuccio was considerably terrified at this, but taking courage at last, he said, “Thou art welcome.” And then he asked him whether he was a lost person? Tingoccio made answer, “Those things only are lost which cannot be found; and if that was my case, how should I be here?”—“I mean not so,” quoth Meuccio; “but what I ask is, whether you be one of the damned?”—“Not so,” said he; “but yet I suffer great pains for some sins which I committed.” He then inquired what punishment was inflicted for every single sin; and Tingoccio resolved him fully in each particular. And asking farther, if he could do him any service here, Tingoccio answered, “Yes; namely, by saying prayers and masses, and giving alms: for those things are of great benefit to the deceased.” This Meuccio promised to do; and as the ghost was offering to depart, he raised himself up, and said, “I remember, my friend, that you had an affair with such a lady: pray what is done to you on that account?”—“O brother,” he replied, “when I first arrived in the other world, I met with a ghost who seemed to have all my sins by heart, and who ordered me to go into a certain place, where I was to do penance for

them, and where I found a great many people who were sent thither upon the same score. And being among them, and calling to mind that particular crime you now mention, for which I expected some very great punishment, I was all over in a tremble, although in the midst of a great fire. When one that stood by me said, 'Pray, what hast thou done more than any one else, that thou quakest to this degree in so hot a place?'—'Alas!' I replied, 'I had to do with my godson's mother.'—'Go, thou fool,' said he, 'is there any relationship in that, to make the crime worse?' This gave me some comfort." Afterwards, it being near daybreak, he said to his friend, "Farewell, for I can stay no longer with you;" so vanished out of the room. Thus Meuccio was convinced that that sort of kindred was of no consequence, and was less scrupulous than he used to be in such cases for the time to come.

The west wind began now to breathe, as the sun grew near his setting; when the king, having concluded his novel, arose, and taking the crown from his own head, placed it upon Lauretta's, saying, "Madam, I crown you with your own crown, as queen of this company; do you, as such, command what you think will be most agreeable to us all." Lauretta, being now queen, sent to the master of the household, and ordered him to have the cloth laid in the pleasant valley sooner than usual, that they might return afterwards with more ease to the palace. Then directing what she would farther have done, she turned to the company, and said, "It was Dioneus's will yesterday, that our novels should be concerning the devices and tricks which women put upon their husbands; and was it not that you would think I had malice in my heart, my subject for to-morrow should be the manner of men's imposing upon their wives. But setting

this aside, let every one think of the stratagems which are in daily practice of the women to the men, or of the men to the women; or, lastly, of one man to another; and this, I think, will afford as agreeable matter for discourse as what we have had to-day." Here she gave them their liberty till supper-time. The company then arose, and whilst some went to wash their feet in the cool stream, others took a walk upon the green turf, under the cover of the spreading trees, and Dioneus and Flammetta sat singing together the song of Palamon and Arcite. Thus all were agreeably employed till supper; when the tables being set forth by the side of the basin, they sat down to the music of a thousand birds, and their faces fanned all the time with cool, refreshing breezes, coming from the little hills around them, they supped with the utmost mirth and satisfaction. Taking a walk afterwards round the valley, before the sun was quite set, they began their march back to the palace, talking all the way of a thousand different things, which had either occurred in this day's discourse, or the preceding, and arrived there as it grew dark. Refreshing themselves after their walk, with wine and sweetmeats, they indulged in a dance by the side of the fountain; sometimes, for variety, to the sound of Tindarus's bagpipe, and sometimes to other more musical instruments. At length the queen called upon Philomena for a song, who thus obeyed:

SONG

I

Such my desire to meet my love,
That I with eager transport fly ;
But why your long unkind delay?
Tell me, my swain, O tell me why.

THE DECAMERON

II

The joys I from your converse feel
No pow'r of language can express ;
Whilst your commanding smiles and voice
Conspire wth mutual aid to bless.

III .

Say then, my life! when shall we meet,
And former vows of love renew?
Soon come the time, be long your stay ;
For all my wishes point to you.

IV

I'll hold you fast, when fortune thus
Auspicious crowns my fond desires ;
Then haste, fly quick to my embrace ;
That pleasing hope my song inspires.

This song made them all conclude that Philomena was subject to the little god; and, by her manner of expressing herself, her passion seemed to be in a fair and prosperous way: but when it was ended, the queen, remembering that the next day was a fast, said, "Gentlemen and ladies, I must let you know, that to-morrow, being Friday, it is to be observed as holy; for you may remember, that when Neiphile was queen, we waived our diversions on that day, and so we did on Saturday. Therefore I think it proper to follow so laudable an example, and to dedicate those two days to our devotions." This was agreeable to the whole company; and a good part of the night being now spent, she dismissed them, and they retired to their respective chambers.

The Decameron

Complete and Unabridged

Privately issued for Subscribers only

giovanni boccaccio
the decameron

the eighth, the ninth and the last day

book iv



susil gupta
post box 10814 calcutta

MCMXLIV SUSIL GUPTA

FIRST PUBLISHED IN INDIA
January 1944

**PUBLISHED BY SUSIL GUPTA, 22/3C, GALIFF STREET,
POST BOX 10814, CALCUTTA.**

**PRINTED BY S. N. GUHA RAY, B.A., AT SREE SARASWATY
PRESS LTD., 32, UPPER CIRCULAR ROAD, CALCUTTA.**

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NOVEL X.—The Marquis of Saluzzo having been prevailed upon by his subjects to marry, in order to please himself in the affair, made choice of a countryman's daughter, by whom he had two children, which he pretended to put to death. Afterwards, seeming as though he was weary of her, and had taken another, he had his own daughter brought home, as if he had espoused her, whilst his wife was sent away in a most distressed condition. At length, being convinced of her patience, he brought her home again, presented her children to her, who were now of considerable years, and ever afterwards loved and honoured her as his lady. 200

THE EIGHTH DAY

THE rays of the rising sun began now to gild the tops of the highest mountains, and the shade of the night was withdrawn from the earth, when the queen and all her company arose on Sunday morning, and, after taking a pleasant walk along the meadows, they went, about the third hour, to a neighbouring chapel, where they heard Divine service. Returning to the house, and dining cheerfully, they afterwards began to sing and dance as usual: when leave was given to such as wished to repose themselves. After the sun had passed the meridian, they all met again by the fountain-side, and being seated, Neophile, by the queen's command, thus commenced:— *

NOVEL I

Gulfardo borrows a sum of money of Guasparruolo, in order to give it his wife for granting him a favour: he afterwards tells Guasparruolo, whilst she was present, that he had paid it to her, which she acknowledges to be true.

SEEING it is my fortune to begin to-day with a novel, I am content to obey: and, as we have heard much of the women over-reaching the men, I have a mind to tell you of a man's being too cunning for a woman: not that I mean to blame him for it, or to say that she was not rightly served. No, I rather commend him, and think she met with no more than her due. I do it also to shew that the men know how to deceive us upon occasion, as

well as we do to impose upon them: though, to speak more properly, this cannot be called deceiving, so much as making a deserved return; for a woman ought to be virtuous and chaste, and to hold her honour as dear as her life: and though our frailty is such that we cannot always be upon our guard, yet, I think that woman ought to be burned who makes a trade of love. But where the little god takes the field, whose force you know is very great, some grains of allowance should be made, as was shewed a few days since by Philostratus, in the story of Madam Philippa di Prato.

There lived at Milan a soldier, who was a German, and his name was Gulfardo; one of a good person, and very trusty to such as retained him in their service, as the Germans generally are; and, because he was always very punctual in his payments, he found a great many merchants ready at any time to lend him any sum, for a very small profit. Now he had placed his affections on a lady called Ambruogia, wife to a certain rich merchant, named Guasparruolo, who was his old friend and acquaintance. Conducting this affair with such caution that neither the husband nor any one else had the least suspicion about it, he took an opportunity one day of declaring his mind to her, when she promised to comply upon two conditions; first, that it should be kept secret; and, secondly, as she had occasion for two hundred florins of gold, that he should supply her with that sum. Gulfardo was so provoked at this sordidness, that his love was changed into rage and contempt; and he resolved, therefore, to put a trick upon her. Accordingly, he let her know that he was ready at all times to do that or anything else which she desired, and that she should send him word when she would have him wait upon her with the money, promising to bring only one friend, in whom

he put entire confidence, and who was his companion upon all occasions. She was content, giving him to understand that her husband was to set out in a few days for Genoa, and that, as soon as he was gone, she would take care to send for him. In the meantime, Gufardo went to Guasparruolo, and said, "Sir, I have an affair of consequence upon my hands, which requires me to raise two hundred florins of gold; if you will advance that sum, I will allow you the most gratuity." Guasparruolo readily agreed to it, and told him out the money. In a few days after he set out for Genoa, as the lady had said, who immediately sent word to Gufardo to come, and bring the two hundred florins. Obedient to the command, he took his friend along with him, and went to her house, when the first thing he did was to give her the money before this person, saying, "Madam, you will keep this, and give it to your husband when he returns." She received it, never thinking why he spoke to her in that manner; but supposing it was because he would have his friend to know nothing of the matter, and replied, "I will; but first let me see what money there is." So she turned it out upon the table, and found there were just two hundred florins; when, locking it up with a secret satisfaction, she came and shewed him into the chamber. And he continued his visits to her during her husband's absence at Genoa.

On his return, he went again to the house, and finding him with her, he said in her hearing, "Sir, the money you were so kind as to lend me was of no service, because I could not compass the thing on the account of which I borrowed it: therefore I brought it back immediately to your wife. Please then to cancel my account." Guasparruolo turned to her, and inquired whether she had received the money? She, seeing the witness present, and not

knowing how to deny it, said, "Yes, I received it, and forgot to tell you."—"Then," he replied, "I am satisfied; farewell—your account is clear." Gulgardo withdrew, well pleased, leaving the lady full of indignation, defeated and despised.

NOVEL II

The parson of Varlungo receives favours from a woman of his parish, and leaves his cloak in pawn for them. He afterwards borrows a mortar of her, which he returns, and demands his cloak, which he says he left only as a token. She mutinies, but is forced by her husband to send it.

THEY all thought that Gulgardo had served the sordid Milanese lady very justly, when the queen turned with a smile towards Pamphilus, and desired him to follow:—

I mean, said he, to relate a short story, touching those people who are continually doing us injuries, without our being able to come at them, in the same manner at least as we are affected; I mean the priests, who set up their standard, and publishing a general crusade against our wives, thinking, when once they bring any of them under their subjection, that they have done as meritorious an action as if they led the sultan captive from Alexandria to Avignon. Now we of the laity cannot return the like to them, though we should do well to revenge what is done to our wives, with as good a will, upon their mothers, sisters, and other relations. I will tell you, therefore, of a country amour, more diverting, in the conclusion especially, than long; by which you may reap the benefit of learning that those people are not always to be regarded.

At Varlungo, a village not far from this place, lived a young healthful priest, who, though not very expert at

reading, yet was he used to hold forth under an elm tree every Sunday, regaling the people there with many good and holy discourses. And as to the women, no priest ever gave them better attendance, for he was daily carrying them presents of cake, holy-water, and candle ends, when he would also give them his blessing. Among all his parishioners, none pleased him so well as a good woman, called Belcolore, wife to a certain labourer, whose name was Bentivegna del Mazzo: she, in truth, was a tight, handsome, brown woman, and could sing, and play upon the virginals, or lead up a dance as well as any lass in the country; so that our priest was almost out of his wits about her. All day long would he go sauntering about to get a sight of her, and on Sunday, when she was at prayers, he would quaver out his *Kyries* and his *Sanctuses*, like an ass that was braying, to let her see that he was a master of music; but if she happened not to be there, he made no such stir; and yet he managed so, that neither the husband nor any of the neighbour perceived it. The better to gain her favour, he was every now and then sending her presents: one day a bunch of leeks, the finest in the country, out of his own garden, tilled with his own hands; another time a basket of pease, and onions or scallions, as the season served. And, when he saw an opportunity, he would give her a glance or two from the corner of his eye, whilst she seemed all the time not to take his meaning; so that hitherto, it was all labour lost. Now one day it happened, as he was idling about, that he met the husband, who was driving an ass laden before him, when he accosted him, and asked whither he was going? "Why truly, father," he replied, "I am going about some business to the city, and I carry these things as a present to Signor Bonaccori da Ginestreto, for him to enter an appearance for me, and to stand my friend

in a cause that I have before the judge." The priest seemed pleased, and said, "Son, you are in the right: go, you have my blessing, and make haste home; and if you should see Lapuccio or Naldino, do not forget to tell them to bring home my leather straps." The honest man promised to take care of his errand, and so went on towards Florence, whilst the priest thought this a fit opportunity to go to the wife, to try what he could do with her. Accordingly, he made no stop till he came hither, and entering into the house, he called out, "God bless you all here; who is within?" Belcolore was gone upstairs, and when she heard him, she said, "You are welcome, sir; but what are you doing abroad in the very heat of the day?" The priest replied, "I am come to spend a little time with you, finding that your husband is gone to the city."

She then came and sat down, and began to pick some cole-seed, which her husband had just been threshing, when he said, "Ah, Belcolore! must I always die for you in this manner?" She laughed, and replied, "Pray what harm have I done you?"—"You have done nothing to me," answered he, "but you will not suffer me to press you."—"Go, go," quoth she, "what! do priests then mind such things?"—"Why not," quoth he, "as well as other people?"—"Well, but what will you give me?" said she, "for I know you are all as covetous as the devil."—"Why, ask what you will," he replied, "a pair of shoes, or a top-knot, or a girdle, or anything else that you like."—"Father," answered she, "I want none of those things, but if you love me as you say, do one thing for me, and I will consent."—"Say what it is," quoth the priest, "and be assured I will do it most willingly."—"On Saturday, then," she said, "I must go to Florence to carry some yarn home, which I have spun, and to get my wheel mended, and if you will lend me five pounds, which I know

ou have, I can redeem from the broker my best gown and petticoat which I have been forced to pawn, and for want of which I am not able to appear upon any saint's day, and you will then find me always ready to oblige you."—"As I hope for a good harvest," quoth the priest, "I have not so much about me, but I will take care you shall have it before that time."—"I know you all," she replied, "to be good promisers, and that you never think of performing what you say. No, I will make no such bargains. If you have not the money in your pocket, go and fetch it."—"Alas!" quoth the priest, "never send me home at this time; you see there is nobody here now, perhaps when I return there may; so that we can never have a better opportunity."—"Very well," said she, "you know my resolution, either bring the money or else go about your business." The priest, perceiving that her intention was not to comply without a *salvum me fac*, whereas he was for having it *sine custodia*, said, "Seeing you will not take my word, behold I leave you this cloak, as a pledge."—"The cloak!" quoth she; "pray what is it worth?"—"Worth!" answered the priest; "I would have you to know that it is made of a fine serge; nay, there are some of our people that call it a broad cloth; I bought it fifteen days ago only, of Otto, the fripperer, and it cost me seven pounds, and Bugglietto tells me, whom you will allow to be a judge, that I got five shillings at least by the bargain."—"Ay! did it stand you in so much?" said she; "I could never have thought it; but give it me first." He obeyed, and was afterwards forced to slink home in his cassock, when he began to repent of what he had done; and, considering with himself that all his vails and offerings for the whole year would not amount to five pounds, he was contriving how to get it back for nothing, when he thought of the following stratagem. The next

day, being holiday, he sent a boy to her house, desiring her to lend him a stone mortar, adding that he had two neighbours to dine with him, and he intended to make them some green sauce. This she sent; and about dinner time, when he expected that she and her husband would be set down together, he called his clerk and said, "Do you go and take this mortar to Belcolore, telling her that your master gives her many thanks, and desires she would send the cloak which he left by way of token." The clerk carried the mortar and found them at table, having just dined, when he delivered his message. She, hearing him demand the cloak, was going to make a reply; but the husband put on an angry look and said, "How came you to take any token from our priest? I have a good mind to box your ears for so doing. Return it, I say, directly, and let him want what he will of ours I charge you never to say him nay." Upon this she went grumbling to the press for it, and giving it to the clerk she said: "Tell your master, the priest, that I say he must expect no more favours from me." The clerk delivered it with those very words, upon which the priest laughed, and said, "When you see her you may tell her that I desire none at any such rate." Now the husband imagined that she had spoken in that manner because he had just been quarrelling with her, for which reason he was under no concern about it. But she continued so provoked that she would never speak to the priest from that time till the time of the vintage, when, after she had long threatened to send him to the devil, he found means to pacify her at last with some new wine and chestnuts; and, instead of the five pounds, he turned her virginals for her and made her a song, which so contented her that they became as good friends as ever.

NOVEL III

Calandrino, Bruno, and Buffalmacco go to Mugnone to look for the Heliotrope; and Calandrino returns laden with stones, supposing that he had found it. Upon this his wife scolds him and he beats her for it; and then tells his companions what they knew better than himself.

THE ladies laughed immoderately at Pamphilus's novel, when the queen turned to Eliza, who began in this manner:—

I do not know whether I shall be able to divert you as much with my short novel, though it be true as well as comical: but yet I will try.

In our city, abounding always with people of different tempers and nations, there dwelt not long since a painter called Calandrino, a simple sort of man and one that dealt much in novelties; he was often in company with two of the same profession, the one named Bruno and the other Buffalmacco, both facetious merry persons, though otherwise subtle enough; and they liked to be with this man on account of his oddities. There lived also in the same city the most agreeable and artful young man in everything he undertook that could be, called Maso del Saggio, who, hearing much of Calandrino's simplicity, wanted to divert himself at his expense by imposing some monstrous story upon him, as a thing very strange and uncommon. And finding him by chance one day in St. John's church, and observing him very attentive in looking on the carved work and painting of the Tabernacle, which was just put over the high altar, he thought he had now such an opportunity as he wanted: and acquainting one of his friends with it, they came near to the place where he was sitting by himself, and pretending not to see him, began to reason together upon the virtues of different stones, whilst Maso seemed to talk as well upon the subject

as though he had been a professional lapidary. Calandrino soon began to listen to this, and finding they had no particular business he got up and joined them. This was what the other wanted; and as he was going on with his discourse, Calandrino asked him where these stones were to be found? Maso replied, "The greatest part are to be met with in Berlinzone, near the city of Baschi, in a country called Bengodi, where they tie the vines with sausages, and you may buy a goose for a penny and have the goslings into the bargain; where there is also a fountain of grated Parmesan cheese, and the people that are upon it do nothing else but make cheese-cakes and mackaroons, which they boil in capon-broth, and keep constantly throwing down from thence, when those that can catch most have most: and there is a river too of the best Malmsey wine that ever was tasted, without one drop of water."

"Surely," says Calandrino, "that must be a fine country indeed! what becomes of the capons after they are boiled?" "O," quoth the other, "the people there eat them."

"Then," said Calandrino, "was you ever there?" Maso replied, "Was I ever there, do you say? If I have been there once I have been a thousand times." Quoth Calandrino, "And how many miles is it off?" He replied, "Many thousands," "Then," said Calandrino, "is it farther off than Abruzzi?" "But a trifle," said the other.

Whilst Calandrino, observing that he had told all this whole tale without changing countenance or so much as a smile, held it all for truth; and he added, "Believe me, sir, the journey is too great, or else I should like to go and scramble for those mackaroons. But are none of the precious stones you are speaking of in that country?" Maso replied, "Two there are which are found to be of great virtue: one of these, which comes from Montisci, they make into mill-stones, which will produce flour of them-

selves. Whence they have a saying, *That grace comes from God and mill-stones from Montisci*; such plenty there is of them, and yet they are as lightly esteemed among us as emeralds are there, of which they have whole mountains, that shine gloriously all night long. Now these mill-stones they set in rings and send to the Sultan; who gives them in return whatever they ask for them. The other stone is what we call the Heliotrope, which renders those that have it invisible." "That," said Calandrino, "is a rare virtue indeed! But where is this stone to be found?" Maso replied, "It is usually met with upon our plains of Mugnone." Quoth the other, "Of what size and colour then is it?" Said Maso, "They are of different sizes but all of a blackish hue." Calandrino took care to remember all he had heard, and pretending to have other business, he went away with a design of going to seek for this stone; but first he had a mind to consult his two friends, and he spent all that morning in seeking after them. But hearing at last that they were at work in the monastery at Fænza, he ran thither, and calling them aside he said to them; "If you will believe me, we have it now in our power to be the richest people in all Florence; for I am informed, by a very credible person, that there is a stone in Mugnone which makes those that carry it about them invisible: therefore I wish that we should go and look for it before anyone else finds it. We shall certainly meet with it, for I know it very well; and when we have it, what have we else to do but to put it in our pockets, and so go to the banker's shops, and carry away what money ~~we~~ please? Nobody will see us, and we shall grow rich all at once, without spending our whole lives in daubing walls."

Bruno and Buffalmacco were fit to burst with laughter, yet they looked at each other with a kind of surprise,

and highly commended their friend's wisdom. When Buffalmacco asked, what the name of it was, Calandrino, having no great memory, had forgot that; therefore he said, "What have we to do with names, so long as we know the virtues? I think we should go look for it immediately." "Then," quoth Bruno, "what sort of stone is it?" "They are of all sizes," he replied, "but generally black; therefore I am of opinion that we should pick up all the black stones we see, till we meet with the true one: so let us lose no time."

"Very right," quoth Bruno, "you talk mighty well; but yet I do not think this is a fit time, for the sun is now very hot, and shines forth with such lustre, that those stones may appear whitish at present, which are black in a morning: besides, many people are now abroad, who seeing us employed in that manner, may guess at our business, and perhaps get the stone before us and we lose all our labour. So that we had better go about it in the morning, when we can more clearly distinguish colours; and on a holiday, because there will be nobody to see us." They agreed to go out then on Sunday morning; and in the meantime he desired they would speak of it to no one, because it had been told him as a secret. He afterwards let them know what he had heard of the country of Bengodi, swearing that every word was truth.

As soon as he was gone, they agreed, between themselves, what to do; whilst he was very impatient till Sunday came, when he arose by daybreak, and called upon them; and going through St. Gallo's gate, they went into the plains of Mugnone, and began to look for this stone. Now Calandrino stole along before the other two, skipping from one place to another, where he saw anything of a black stone, and put them all into his pockets. And whilst his companions were picking up here and there

one, he had filled his pockets, bosom, and coat-skirts, which he had tucked up for that purpose with his belt. On this, they seeing him laden, and it being now dinner-time, one said to the other, "Where is Calandrino?" "I do not know," quoth the other, "but he was here just now." "Then," said the first, "I suppose he is gone home to his dinner, and has left us here upon a fool's errand." "We are rightly served," replied the other, "for being so weak as to believe him. Who but ourselves could ever have thought of finding such sort of stones here?" Calandrino, hearing what passed between them, took it for granted that he had the true stone, and so was invisible: and being over and above rejoiced, he resolved to go home, without speaking a word, leaving them to follow if they would.

Buffalmacco perceiving his intent, said to Bruno, "What must we do? Why do not we go likewise?" Bruno replied, "What should we stay any longer for? But I vow and protest he shall put no more trick upon me; and was he as near to me now as he has been all this morning, I would give him such a knock on the heel with this pebble, that he should have cause to remember it;" and as he was speaking the words, he hit him a stroke which made him jump again; yet Calandrino held his peace, and got along as fast as he could. Buffalmacco then taking another stone, said, "And I would give him a blow over the back with this;" and so they kept pelting him all the way, even to the gate of St. Gallo, when, throwing the rest of their stones down, they let the ~~guards~~ into the secret, who humoured the thing, and let him pass as if they had not seen him. So he went on, without stopping, to his own house, which was near to the mills; and fortune was so favourable to this jest of theirs, that nobody said a word to him all through the

city; and indeed he saw but few persons, because they were mostly at dinner. Coming thus loaden home, he met his wife at the top of the stairs, who, being provoked at his long stay, fell upon him in a violent manner, saying, "The Devil sure has possessed the man, that he will never come home till everybody has dined." Which when he heard, and being sensible that he was now seen, he began, full of wrath and vexation, to say, "O! thou wicked woman, art thou there? Thou hast undone me; but I will be revenged on thee for it." And throwing down all his stones, he ran violently at her, and beat her most unmercifully.

In the meantime his two friends after they had laughed a little with the guards at the gate, followed him at a distance to his house; and being at the door, heard him beating his wife: and seeming as if they were just come there, they called aloud to him, whilst he, all in a heat, and weary, looked out of the window, and desired them to come up: this they did, seemingly much out of temper, and seeing the stairs covered with stones, and she beaten and bruised in one corner of the room, and he in another, all unbuttoned, and like a man quite spent, they said, "Why, how now, Calandrino! What are you going to build, that you make all this preparation? And you, Madam, how comes it to pass that you are so misused?" But he, quite fatigued, and vexed also for his supposed loss, was able to make them no answer. On which Buffalmacco said again, "Calandrino, if you were angry with any other person, you ought not to have made a jest of us, as you have done, in leaving us yonder like a couple of fools; where you carried us to seek for a precious stone, and then went away without saying a word: but assure yourself, you shall serve us so no more." He replied, after much ado, "My friends, do not be in a

passion; the case is different from what you imagine. Indeed I found the stone; and, observe, I pray, whether it was not so. When you inquired after me the first time, I was then close to you; and as you were coming away without seeing me, I then walked before you;" and relating everything that they had said and done upon it, he added, "And as I was coming through the gate, loaden with these stones, the guards, though they examine everyone, let me pass unmolested: besides, I met with divers of my friends in the street, who are continually teasing me to go in and drink with them, but not one of them said a word, because they never saw me. At last, when I came home, I met with this devil of a woman here, who straightway saw me, because women, you know, make everything lose its virtue, and so I, who was on the point of being the happiest man in Florence, am now the most unfortunate; and it was upon that account that I beat her, and I could tear her to pieces for it:" and he was going to beat her over again: whilst they, seeing all this, seemed to wonder very much, and began to affirm the same thing, though they were fit to die with laughing. But when he was going to beat her a second time, they interposed, telling him, that she was not to blame in the case, for that he should have given her notice to keep out of the way all that day; and that this was owing either to his ill fortune, or else it was a judgment upon him for deceiving his friends; for after he knew that he had found the stone, he ought to have told them of it. At last, with great difficulty, they reconciled them, and leaving him yet much out of sorts, and with his house full of stones, departed.

NOVEL IV

The provost of the church of Fiesole is in love with a lady who has no liking to him; and he, thinking that he is with her, is all the time with her maid, when her brothers bring the bishop thither to witness it.

ELIZA'S novel was ended, when the queen, without delay, turned to Emilia, who began in this manner:—

It will appear from our preceding novels, that the priests, friars, and the rest of the clergy, have contributed their full share to our diversion: but as so much can hardly be said, but something may be added, I shall, therefore, tell you a story of a certain provost, who had a mind to make a lady love him, whether she would or not, and who accordingly treated him as he deserved.

Fiesole, the summit whereof you may descry from this place, was once a great and ancient city, and, though now in ruins, had always its bishop, and so it has still. Adjoining to the cathedral, in a little house of her own, lived a certain widow lady for the greatest part of the year, and along with her two of her brothers, both very worthy gentlemen. Now, as she went constantly to church, it happened that the provost fell so much in love with her, that he was never easy but in 'her company; and in length of time he had the assurance to speak to her, entreating the same kind and tender regard for him. This provost, it is true, was something ancient, but yet of a juvenile disposition: he was so proud also and haughty, and did everything with so ill a grace, that he was disagreeable to all the world. This lady in particular had an utter aversion to him; wherefore, she very prudently replied, "Sir, I am much obliged to you for your gracious offer, but we should have regard to both our characters in this case. You are my spiritual father, a priest also, and in years; all which considerations should inspire you

with different sentiments: on the other part, I am past a child, being, as you see, in my widowhood, and, therefore, more discretion will be expected from me; for which reason I must beg your pardon, resolving to have nothing to do with you in the affair you mention."

The provost, no way dismayed with one denial, ceased not his solicitations, as well by letters as word of mouth, every time he saw her at church, till she, growing weary of his impertinence, resolved to rid herself of him in such a manner as he deserved, since she saw there was no other way; but yet she would do nothing without first consulting her brothers; when letting them know his design upon her, and what she meant to do, and having free leave from them, she went in a few days to church as usual. When he saw her come, he went familiarly to meet her, and she received him with an open countenance, retired purposely apart with him, and fetching a deep sigh, said, "I have often heard, sir, that there is no fort so strong but what it may be taken, which I now find to be my own case, for you have so beset me with complaisance and love, that I have been forced to break my resolution, and am now disposed to be at your service." He replied, with a great deal of joy, "Madam, I hold myself much obliged to you, and, to tell you the truth I have often wondered how you could hold out so long, especially as I never met with anything like it before. Nay, I have said, that if women were made of silver, they would not be worth one farthing, because there is none of them would be able to stand the test. But tell me, when can we be together?" She replied, "Sweet sir, it may be whenever you please, as I have no husband to inquire after me at nights; but I cannot think of a place."—"How so?" he replied; "why not in your own house?" She made answer, "Sir, you know I have two brothers, who have

company most evenings, and our house is very small, so that it is impossible for you to come there, unless you could submit to be like a dumb person, and in the dark also; if you will consent to that, it may be done, because they never come into my chamber; but yet theirs is so near to mine, that the least whisper is heard."—"Madam," quoth he, "never mind it for one or two nights, till I can think of some more convenient place." She replied, "Sir, that is just as you please; but I beg of you that it may be a secret."—"Madam," said he, "make no doubt of that; but, if possible, let it be this evening."—"With all my heart," said she; and directing him how and when he was to come, she left him and went home. Now she had a maid not over young, and the most ugly creature that ever was born; for she had a flat nose, wry mouth, great thick lips, black rotten teeth, sore eyes, with a complexion green and yellow, like a Mulatto; besides all this, she was both lame and crooked, and her name was Giuta, but having such a miserable countenance of her own, she was called, by way of derision, Ciutazza (*i.e.*, Trull); nor was her temper one jot more amiable than her person. She called this maid to her, therefore, and said, "Ciutazza, if thou wilt do a little job for me, I will give thee a new gown."—"Madam," quoth she, "give it me, and I will go through fire and water to serve you."—"I mean," said the lady, "to have thee sleep with a man this very night in my bed; but be sure you do not speak a word, for fear my brothers should hear thee in the next room; and in the morning thou shalt have it."—"To oblige you, Madam," she replied, "I would sleep with half a dozen." So in the evening the provost came, according to their agreement, whilst the lady's brothers were in their own room, as she had directed, where they took care that he should hear them; and the provost went silently into her

chamber in the dark, as did also Ciutazza, and to bed they went. As soon as this was done she told her brothers, and left them to do the rest, as they had before resolved. Accordingly they went secretly to the piazza, when fortune was more favourable to their design than they could have expected, for they met the bishop coming to their house to pay them a visit. And he having told them his intention, they turned back with him, and shewed him into a court, as it was in the summer; and after they had lighted up the candles, and were seated together to a glass of wine, one of the young gentlemen said, "My lord, since you are so kind to do us this favour of your own accord, as we were going to invite you, we desire you would please to see a curiosity which we have ready to shew you." The bishop consented, and one of them, taking a candle, led the way into the chamber where the provost and Ciutazza were in bed, when they found them asleep in each other's arms. The provost awoke upon this, ashamed and frightened to death, and hid his head under the bed-clothes, whilst the bishop rallied him severely, and made him put his head out, that he might see whom he had got in bed with him. "When he, finding how the lady had served him, and being sensible of the utter shame he had incurred, was the most miserable man alive. And having put on his clothes again, by the bishop's order, he was sent under a guard to his own house, to undergo a penance equal to his crime. The bishop then desired to know how it happened, and they related every particular, on which he highly commended both the lady and her brothers, who, rather than imbrue their hands in a clergyman's blood, had dealt with him according to his merits, in a different manner. He ordered him, therefore, a penance for forty days, but love and disdain made him mourn nine days more; and, for a long time after, he could never

go along the street, but the boys would point at him, and say, "Yonder is the priest that lay with Ciutazza;" which was such a mortification, that he was almost distracted. Thus the good and prudent lady freed herself from the provost's importunities, and the girl obtained her reward.

NOVEL V

Three young sparks play a trick with a judge, whilst he is sitting upon the bench hearing causes.

THE lady in Emilia's novel was highly commended for what she had done, when the queen looked towards Philostruts, and said, "It is now your turn to speak." He consequently thus began:—

A young gentleman, mentioned some time since by Eliza, viz., Maso del Saggio, makes me pass over a story which I meant to have told you, in order to relate one of him, and certain of his friends; which, though a little unseemly, may make you laugh nevertheless, and so I shall venture to report it.

You must all have heard that we have often had magistrates come hither from the marquisate of Ancona, the most paltry people imaginable, and so extremely miserable and covetous that they have brought fellows along with them by way of judges and notaries, who seem to have been rather taken from the ploughtail, or out of a cobbler's shop, than the schools of the law. Now there was a certain person came once as Podesta and amongst the judges that attended him was one Nicola da ~~sanc~~ Lepidio, whose aspect bespoke him rather a thinker than anything else, and who was deputed with the rest of the judges to hear criminal causes. And as it happens that people frequently go to those courts who have no business,

so it chanced that Maso del Saggio was there in quest of one of his friends; and being where this Nicola was sitting, he thought him some strange bird that he had never seen before, and began to take a more perfect view of him. He had a greasy fur cap on, with an ink-horn hanging at his girdle, and a gown shorter than his under coat; but what appeared the most comical of all was, that his breeches came down to his ankles, and yet they were so scantily made, that he could not keep them buttoned, but they were constantly open all before. Such a figure as this soon made Maso forget what he had come about; and meeting with two of his companions, the one named Ribi, and the other Matteuzzo, people of as much humour as himself, he said to them, "You will oblige me very much if you will go into the court along with me, for I can shew you the oddest figure perhaps that ever you saw:" so he carried them to see the judge and his breeches. As soon as they came into the court, they fell a laughing, and observing upon a nearer approach, that the boards on which he set his feet were so broken that a man might easily put his hand and arm up, he added, "I wish you would let us pull his breeches down entirely, for it may be easily done." They saw at once which way he meant, and having agreed about it, they came thither again the next morning. And the court being crowded with people, Matteuzzo crept privately under the bench where the judge was sitting. Whilst Maso went on one side, and took hold of his gown, as Ribi did on the other and began to cry out, "For Heaven's sake, my lord, before this fellow goes away, will you order him to restore me a pair of shoes which he has stolen from me, and now denies it, though I saw him in the fact, and it is not a month since he had them new soled?" Ribi on the other part bawled aloud, "My lord, pray do not believe him, for he is a

most intolerable villain; and because I came to demand a wallet that he had stolen from me, he has trumped up this story of his shoes. If you will not believe me, I can bring Trecca, my neighbour, and Grassa, the woman that sells tripe, and the person that sweeps St. Mary's church, who saw him as he came out of the country." But Maso made such a clamour on the other side, that he would not let Ribi be heard, and Ribi cried out likewise.

The judge standing up to hear what each had to say, Matteuzzo took that opportunity to put his hand up between the boards, and laid hold of his breeches, which came down immediately, as he happened to be lean and thin about the crupper; whilst he, perceiving what had happened, and not knowing the reason, would have pulled his gown before him to have concealed it, and he endeavoured to sit down again, but Maso held him up on one side, and Ribi on the other, crying out, "My lord, you do me great injustice not to attend to what I say, and to turn your back upon me without giving me the hearing (for there were no indictments in writing for such trivial cases). And they kept him in that manner, till all the people in the court saw that he had his breeches about his heels. In the meantime Matteuzzo had stolen away undiscovered; and Ribi, thinking that he had now done enough, said, "I will appear elsewhere for justice, I vow to heaven;" and Maso let go on the other part also, saying, "Some time or other I shall find you more at leisure than you have been this morning." Thus they parted different ways, and got out of the court as fast as they could. Whilst the judge, drawing up his breeches before all the people, and being now sensible of the trick that had been put upon him, began to inquire where those two men were gone that had been complaining to him.

about their shoes and their wallet; and hearing nothing of them, he swore that he would know whether it was a custom at Florence to pull a judge's breeches down as he was administering justice. The Podesta also was in great rage about it, till being told by some of his friends that this was done only to let him see the people all took notice, that, instead of bringing judges, he had brought some paltry scoundrels among them, to make a better trade of it, he thought it best to hold his tongue. Consequently nothing farther was said about it at that time.

NOVEL VI

Bruno and Buffalmacco steal a pig from Calandrino, and make a charm to find out the thief with pills made of ginger and some sack; giving him, at the same time, pills made of aloes: whence it appeared that he had it himself, and they make him pay handsomely, for fear they should tell his wife.

PHILOSTRATUS'S novel was no sooner ended, which had made them all very merry, but the queen turned to Philomena, who accordingly began thus:—

As Philostratus was led to the last story by the mentioning the name of Maso, in like manner has the novel concerning Calandrino and his two companions brought to my mind another relating to the same persons, which will, I think, afford you pleasure.—Who those people were it would be needless to say, because you had enough of that before. Therefore I shall begin with telling you that Calandrino had a little farm not far from Florence, which came to him in right of his wife; and, amongst his other goods there, he used to have a pig fatted every year, and some time in December he and his wife went always to kill and salt it for the use of the family. Now it happened once, she being unwell at the time, that he went thither

by himself to kill this pig, which Bruno and Buffalmacco hearing, and knowing she was not to be there, they went to see a priest in the neighbourhood, a great friend of his, and to be with him for a few days. Now he had killed the pig that very day they came thither, and seeing them along with the priest, he called them, and said, "You are kindly welcome, gentlemen; I would gladly have you see what a manager I am." And, taking them into the house, he shewed them this pig. They saw that it was fat, and were told by him that it was to salt for his family. When Bruno said, "Go, you fool! you had better sell it, for us to spend the money, and then tell your wife that it is stolen."—"No," said Calandrino, "she will never believe it; and besides, she would go near to turn me out of doors. Trouble me then no farther about any such thing, for I will never do it." They said a great deal more to him, but all to no purpose; at length he invited them to supper, but did it in such a manner that they refused to go; and, after he was gone away, said one to the other, "Suppose we steal this pig from him to-night."—"How is it possible?" replied the other. "Oh," quoth the first, "I know well enough how to do it, if he does not remove it in the meantime from the place where we just now saw it."—"Then let us do it," said the second, "and afterwards we and the parson will make merry over it."

The priest assured them that he should like it of all things. "We must use a little art," quoth the first: "you know how covetous he is, and how freely he drinks always when it is at other's cost. Let us get him then to the tavern, where the parson shall make a pretence of treating us all, out of compliment to him; he will soon get drunk, and then the thing will be easy enough, as there is nobody in the house but himself." This they did, whilst he, finding that the parson was to pay, took his glasses off pretty

freely, and getting his dose, walked home betimes, and left the door open, thinking that it was shut, and so went to bed. Buffalmacco and Bruno went from thence to sup with the priest, and as soon as supper was over, they took proper materials with them to get into the house; but finding the door open, they carried off the pig, and went to bed likewise. Calandrino, as soon as he had slept his wine off, arose in the morning, and coming down stairs, and finding the door open, and his pig gone, he began to inquire of people if they knew anything of the matter, and receiving no tidings of it, he made a terrible outcry, saying, "What must I do? somebody has stolen my pig." Bruno and Buffalmacco were no sooner out of bed, but they went to his house to hear what he would say; and the moment he saw them, he roared out, "Oh, my friends my pig is stolen!" Upon this Bruno whispered him, and said, "Well, I am glad to see you wise once in your life."—"Alas!" quoth he, "it is too true." Bruno said, "Keep still in the same story, and make a noise whilst everyone believes you." He now began to bawl louder, and said, "Indeed! I vow and swear to you that it is stolen."—"Right," quoth the other, "be sure you let everybody hear you, that it may appear so."—"Do you think," said he, "that I would forswear myself about it? May I be hanged this moment if it is not so."—"How is it possible?" quoth Bruno; "I saw it but last night; never imagine that I can believe it."—"It is so, however," answered he, "and I am undone: I know not how to go home again, for my wife will never believe me, and I shall have no ~~peace~~ this twelvemonth."—"It is a most unhappy thing," said Bruno, "if it be true; but you know I taught you to say so last night, and you should not make sport both with your wife and us at the same time." At this he began to roar out afresh, saying; "Good God! you make me

mad to hear you talk; I tell you once for all that it was stolen this very night."—"Nay if it be," quoth Buffalucco, "we must think of some way to get it back again."—"And what way must we take," said he, "to find it?"—"Depend upon it," replied the other, "that nobody came from the Indies to steal it; it must be somewhere in your neighbourhood, and if you could get the people together, I could make a charm with some bread and cheese, that would soon discover the person."—"True," said Bruno, "but they would know in that case what you are about; and the person that has it would never come near you."—"How must we manage then?" quoth the other. "Oh," replied Bruno, "you shall see me do it with some pills of ginger, and a little wine, which I will ask them to come and drink. They will have no suspicion what our design is, and we can make a charm of these, as well as of the bread and cheese."—"Very right," quoth the other. "Well, what do you say, Calandrino? Have you a mind we shall try it?"—"For Heaven's sake do," he said: "were I only to know who the thief is, I should be half comforted."—"Well, then," quoth Bruno, "I am ready to go to Florence for the things, if you will but give me money." He happened to have a few shillings in his pocket, which he gave him.

Accordingly Bruno went to a friend's house at Florence, and bought a pound of ginger made into pills, and he got two pills of aloes, which had a private mark that he should not mistake them, being all candied over with sugar; and buying a flask of good sack also, he returned to Calandrino, and said, "To-morrow you must take care to invite every one that you have the least suspicion of: it is a holiday, and they will be glad to come, and we will complete the charm to-night, and bring the things to your house in the morning, whilst, upon your account, I will

take care then to do and say what is necessary upon such an occasion." Calandrino did so, and in the morning he had all the people in the parish almost together under an elm-tree in the churchyard, when his two friends, brought the pills and wine, and making them stand round in a circle, Bruno said to them, "Gentlemen, it is fit that I should tell you the reason of your being summoned here in this manner, to the end, if any thing should happen which you do not like, that I be not blamed for it. You must know, then, that Calandrino had a pig stolen last night; and, as some of the company here must have taken it, he, that he may find out the person, would have every man take and eat one of these pills, and drink a glass of wine after it; and whoever the guilty person is, you will find he will not be able to get a bit of it down, but it will taste so bitter that he will, be forced to spit it out: so that, to prevent such open shame, he had better, whoever he is, make a secret confession to the priest, and I will proceed no farther."

All the people present shewed a readiness to taste; so placing them all in order, he gave every man his pill, and coming to Calandrino, he gave one of the aloe pills to him, which he straightway put into his mouth, and no sooner did he begin to chew it, but he was forced to spit it out. Every one was now attentive to see who spit his pill out, and whilst Bruno kept going round, taking no notice, he heard somebody say behind him, "Hey-day! what is the meaning of its disagreeing so with Calandrino?" When, turning suddenly about, and seeing that Calandrino had spit it out, he said, "Stay a little, honest friends, and be not too hasty in judging; it may be something else that has made him spit, and therefore he shall try another." So he gave him the other aloe pill, and then went on to the rest that were unserved. But if the first was bitter

to him, this he thought much more so: however, he endeavoured to get it down as well as he could, but it was impossible; it made the tears run down his cheeks, and he was forced to spit it out at last, as he had done the other. In the meantime Buffalmacco was going about with the wine; but when he and they all saw what Calandrino had done, they began to call out, and say that he had robbed himself; and some of the people were greatly incensed at him for it. And after they were all departed, Buffalmacco said, "I always thought that you yourself were the thief, and that you were willing to make us believe it was stolen, in order to keep your money in your pocket, as we should expect a treat upon the occasion." Whilst he, who had yet the taste of the aloes in his mouth, fell a swearing that he knew nothing of the matter. "Tell me truly, then," said Buffalmacco, "did you not sell it?" This made him quite desperate. When Bruno said, "I was just now told by one of the company that you have a mistress in this neighbourhood, to whom you are very kind, and that he is confident you have given it to her. You know you once took us to the plains of Mugnone, to look for some black stones, when you left us in the lurch, and pretended you had found them; and now you think to swear, and make us believe, that your pig is stolen, when you have either given it away, or sold it. You have put so many tricks upon us, that we intend to be fooled no more by you. Therefore, as we have had a deal of trouble in the affair, you shall make us amends, by giving us two couple of fowls, unless you mean that we should tell your wife." Calandrino now perceiving that he was not to be believed, and being unwilling to have them add to his troubles by bringing his wife upon his back, was forced to give them the fowls, which they took to Florence along with the pork, leaving him there to complain

of the loss he had sustained, and the injuries that were done him.

NOVEL VII

A certain scholar is in love with a widow lady named Helena; who, being enamoured of another person, makes the former wait a whole night for her during the midst of winter in the snow. In return, he afterwards contrives that she shall stand naked on the top of a tower in the middle of July, exposed to the sun and all manner of insects.

THE company could not help laughing at Calandrino's simplicity, though they thought it too hard for him to lose both the fowls and the pig; and, the story being ended, the queen ordered Pampinea to begin, which she did in this manner:—

It often happens that the mockery which a man intends to another falls upon his own head, and therefore it is no mark of a person's good sense to take "delight in such practices. In our former novels we have made ourselves very merry with divers tricks that have been put upon people, where no revenge has been taken; but I design to move your compassion for a just return which a certain lady of our city met with, whose jest recoiled upon herself and to the hazard of her life, being mocked in the same manner; the hearing of which may be of great service to you, as it will be a caution not to do the like; and you will be wise if you attend to it.

There lived not long since at Florence, a young handsome lady of a good family as well as plentiful fortune, named Helena; who, being left a widow, had for some time continued so, though she was courted by a young gentleman who was entirely to her good liking; and, by the assistance of her favourite maid, they had frequent interviews together. In the meantime, a young gentleman

of our city who had long studied at Paris, not for the sake of retailing his learning out by the inch as we say, as many do, but only to know the reasons of things and the causes of the same, as becomes a gentleman—he, whose name was Rinieri, returning to Florence, was much respected there, both on account of his rank and learning, and lived as became a worthy citizen. But as it often happens that persons of the most sense and scholarship are the soonest caught in the snares of love, so it fell out with our Rinieri. For, being at a feast one day, he met with this lady, clothed in her weeds, when she seemed to him so full of beauty and sweetness that he never saw anyone to compare to her; and happy he thought the man whom fortune should bless with her as his wife. And casting his eye towards her once and again, and being sensible that great and valuable things are not to be attained without trouble, he resolved to make it his whole care to please her and gain her affection if it were possible. The lady, who did not always look upon the ground, but thought full as well of herself as she deserved, throwing her eyes artfully about her was soon sensible if anyone beheld her with pleasure, when she immediately took notice of Rinieri; and she said, smiling to herself, "I think I am not come out to-day in vain, for I seem to have caught a gudgeon." And she would give him now and then a glance from the corner of her eye to let him see she was pleased with him, thinking that the more admirers she had of the greater value would her charms be to that person for whom she had designed them. Our scholar now began to lay all his philosophy aside, and turned his thoughts entirely to her; and learning where she lived, he was continually passing that way, under one pretence or another, thinking thereby to please her; and the lady, for the reason before given, seemed to value

herself the more upon it. Thereupon he found means of talking to the maid, desiring her interest and intercession with her mistress, so that he might obtain her favour; who promised him very fully, and accordingly she let her lady know it, when she made greatest jest in the world of him, and said, "Observe now, this man is come here to lose the little sense that he went to fetch from Paris, and he shall have what he looks for. Go, then, and tell him that my love is equally great for him, but that I must have regard to my honour, which, if he is as wise as he would be thought, he will like me the better for." Alas ! poor woman, she knew not what it was to try her wit against a scholar ! The maid delivered her message, upon which the scholar, being overjoyed, began to press the thing more closely, and to write letters and send her presents, which were all received, though he had no answer in return but what was general; and in this manner he was long kept in suspense. At last, having related the whole affair to her lover, and he a little uneasy and jealous about it, to convince him that his suspicion was ill-grounded, and being much solicited by the scholar, she sent her maid to tell him that she had yet no opportunity to oblige him since she had made a discovery to him of her love, but that the next day, being Christmas-day, she hoped to be with him directing him to come that evening into her court, and she would meet him there as soon as it was convenient. The scholar, overjoyed at this, failed not of coming at the time appointed, when he was put into the courtyard by the maid, and locked up there to wait for the lady, who had invited her lover to be with her that night; and after supping agreeably together, she let him know what she meant to do, adding, "And you may now see how great my regard is for you, as well as for him of whom you have been so foolishly jealous."

The lover listened eagerly to this discourse, being desirous of seeing some proof of that, for which he had only her word. Now a great snow had fallen that day before, and everything was covered with it, which made it seem colder to our scholar than otherwise it would have been; however, he bore it with great patience, expecting soon to have amends made him.—In a little time she said to her lover, “Let us go into the chamber, and see out of the window what this man is doing, of whom you are jealous, and what answers he will make to the maid, whom I have sent to talk with him.” So they went upstairs, and looking out, without being seen, they heard the girl saying to him, “Sir, my lady is exceeding uneasy, for one of her brethren is happened to come to see her this evening and they have had a great deal of talk together, and he would needs sup with her, nor is he yet gone away; but I believe he will not stay long: and for that reason she has not been able to come to you, but will make what haste she can, and she hopes you will not take it ill that you are forced to wait thus.” The scholar, supposing it to be really so, replied, “Pray tell your mistress to have no care for me, till she can conveniently be with me, but that I desire she would be as speedy as possible.” The girl then left him, and went to bed. “Well!” said the lady to her lover, “what think you now? Can you imagine, if I had that love for him which you seemed to apprehend, that I would let him stay there to be frozen to death?” Thus they talked and laughed together about the poor scholar, whilst he was forced to walk backwards and forwards in the court, to keep himself warm, without having anything to sit down upon, or the least shelter from the weather, cursing the brother’s long stay, and expecting that everything he heard was the door opening for him—but expecting in vain. About midnight she said again to

her lover, "Well, my dear, what is your opinion now of our scholar? Whether do you think his sense or my love the greater at this time? Sure you will let me hear no more of that jealousy which you seemed to express yesterday; be convinced that I value you as much as you can love me. But," continued she, "we will take another look out, and see whether that fire be extinct or not, which he used to write me word had well nigh consumed him." When, going again to the window, they saw him dancing a jig in the snow, to the chattering of his teeth, which was occasioned by the excessive cold: and she said, "You see now that I can make people dance without the music either of fiddles or bagpipes; but let us go to the door, and do you stand still and listen whilst I speak to him; perhaps we may have as much diversion in that manner as by seeing him." So she went softly, and called to him through the keyhole, which made the scholar rejoice exceedingly, supposing that he was now to be admitted, and he stepped to the door, and said, "I am here, madam; for Heaven's sake open it, for I am ready to die with cold." She replied, "Surely you can never be so starved with this little snow; it is much colder at Paris: but I can by no means let you in yet; for this unlucky brother of mine, who came to sup with me last night, is yet with me; but he will go soon and then I will come directly and open the door: it was with great difficulty that I could get away from him now to you, to desire you would not be uneasy at waiting so long."—"Let me beg of you, then," said he, "to open the door, that I may stand only under cover, for it snows fast, and afterwards I will wait as long as you please."—"Alas! my dear love," quoth the lady, "the door makes such a noise always in opening that my brother will hear it; but I will go and bid him depart first, and then open it."—"Make what haste you

can," said the scholar, "and pray have a good fire ready against I come in, for I am so benumbed that I have almost lost all sense of feeling."—"That is impossible," replied she, "if it be true what you have so often written to me, that you were all on fire with love; but I see now that you were jesting all the time. Have a good heart, however, for I am going." The scholar now perceiving that it was all an insult and mockery upon him, made several attempts to open the door, looking round also to see if there was any other way to get out; but not finding any, he began to curse the inclemency of the weather, the lady's cruelty, and the long nights, together with his great simplicity; and being outrageously exasperated against her, his most violent love was changed into as rank a hatred, whilst he was contriving various methods of revenge, which he now longed as much for, as he had before desired to be with her. Thus he was kept all night long, and when daylight began to appear, the maid, as she had before been instructed, came down into the court, and said, with a show of pity, "It was very unlucky, sir, that person's coming to our house last night, for he has given us a world of trouble, and you are, in consequence, almost frozen to death. But you know the reason. Have a little patience; for what could not be done then may be brought to pass another time. I know very well that nothing could have given my lady so much uneasiness." The scholar, as wise as he was full of wrath, knowing that threats serve only as weapons to the persons so threatened, kept all his resentment within his own breast, and, without shewing himself the least disturbed, said very submissively, "In truth, I never had a worse night in my life; but I know very well that your lady is not at all to blame, because she came to me several times, with a great deal of humanity, to excuse herself, and

comfort me. And, therefore, as you say, what could not be now, may be another time. Farewell, and pray give my service to her." So he made what shift he could to get home, being almost dead, and threw himself upon the bed to rest, when upon his awakening, he found he had lost the use of both his hands and feet. He therefore sent for physicians, and let them into the cause of his illness, and in length of time they found means to supple the nerves, so that he could stir his limbs; but had it not been for his youth, and the warm weather coming on soon after, he would have had a hard task to have recovered. Getting them sound and well again, and keeping his enmity to himself, he yet appeared to love her as much as ever; and fortune at last furnished him with an opportunity of satisfying his revenge: for her lover had taken a fancy to another lady, and turned her adrift, which gave her such concern, that she seemed to pine away upon it. But the maid, who was much grieved, finding no way to comfort her for the loss of her spark, and seeing the scholar pass that way sometimes, had a foolish notion come into her head, that he might be able to bring him back by some magical operation, of which he was said to be a great master; and she acquainted her with it. The foolish lady, little thinking that had he really been a proficient he would scarcely have applied his knowledge to do her such a service, listened to the girl, and then bid her learn from him whether he was willing to oblige her, promising anything in return he should desire. She delivered the message, when the scholar said, with great joy to himself, "Thank Heaven, the time is now come for me to be revenged of this woman for the injury she did me in return for my great love." And he replied, "Tell your mistress that she need give herself no trouble, for were her lover in the Indies I could bring

him back to ask her pardon: but concerning the manner of doing it, that I will impart to her as soon as she pleases; and so pray acquaint her from me with my service."

The girl reported what he said, and they agreed to meet in St. Lucia's meadow. Accordingly they came thither, and had much conversation by themselves; whilst she, forgetting how he had been served by her, acquainted him with the whole affair, and desired his assistance. The scholar then said, "Madam, amongst other things that I studied at Paris was the black art, in which I made a great progress; but, as it is a sinful practice, I have made a resolution never to follow it, either for myself or any other person; though indeed I love you so much, that I am unable to refuse either that or anything else which you shall require from me: but I must put you in mind, that it is a more troublesome operation than you may imagine, either to bring a man back to love a woman, or a woman to love a man; for it is to be done only by the person concerned, who should have a great presence of mind: for all must be in the night, in a solitary place, and nobody present; which conditions I do not know whether you will be able to conform to." She, more enamoured than wise, replied, "My love for him is such, that I would undertake anything to have him again, who has abandoned me so wrongfully; only tell me in what I must shew that presence of mind you speak of." Said the scholar then to her, "Madam, I must make an image of tin in his name whom you wish to have yours, which I shall send to you; and immediately, whilst the moon is in the decline, you must, after your first sleep, bathe seven times with it in the river; after which you must go into some high tree or upon some uninhabited house-top, and, turning to the north, repeat seven times, with the same image in your hand, some certain words which I

shall give you in writing; and then two damsels, the most beautiful that ever you saw, will appear to you, graciously demanding what service you have for them to do, which you may safely tell them, taking care not to name one person for another; when they will leave you and you may go afterwards and dress yourself, and depart to your own house, being assured that before midnight your lover will come with tears in his eyes to beg your pardon, and from that time he will never forsake you more." The lady, hearing this story, began to think she had already recovered her lover; and she replied, "Never fear, I can do all this very well, having the most convenient place for the purpose that can be; for there is a farm of mine close to the river Arno; and, now I remember, there is an uninhabited tower not far off, where the shepherds climb up sometimes by help of a ladder, to look for their strayed cattle; there I can do what you have enjoined me." The scholar, who knew perfectly both the farm and tower, which was the very place that he himself had contrived, answered, "Madam, I never was in that country, and therefore am unacquainted with the farm and tower you mention, but if it be so, it is convenient enough; so, at a proper time, I will send the image, and the words you are to repeat; and I hope when your point is secured, that you will be mindful of me in the promise you have made me." She agreed without fail to remember him, and so took her leave. The scholar now concluding that his scheme had taken effect, had an image made, and wrote out an old tale by way of charm, which he sent as soon as he thought it a proper time, to her, letting her know that he would have it done the following night: and he went privately with one servant to a friend's house which was near, to be ready for what he had designed. She also and her maid went to her farm, when, pretending

to go to bed, and having sent her maid to sleep, she went to the river's side, close to the tower, and looking round to see that nobody was near, she stripped, and hid her clothes under a bush, and bathed herself seven times with the image, and then went naked to the tower with the image in her hand. The scholar, about the beginning of the night, had hid himself along with his servant in the sallows near to the place; when, seeing her go past him in that manner, and admiring the extraordinary beauty of her person, he began to relent a little, and to have some thoughts of putting up with the injury. Till calling to mind her unparalleled inhumanity towards him, and what he had suffered, there was an end of pity, and he resolved to put his purpose into execution. So she mounted up into the tower, and having turned to the north, began to say the words which he had given her to repeat, whilst he went softly after her, and took away the ladder, waiting afterwards to see what she would say and do. She had now said the words over seven times, and was expecting the two damsels to come; and thus she waited until daylight began to appear, when, being weary, as it was a little cool withal, and sorry also that it had not happened as the scholar had told her, she began to say to herself, "Perhaps he has a mind I should pass such a night as I occasioned him to have, but he mistakes the thing, for the nights are not one third part so long now as they were then, and besides the cold was infinitely greater at that time." She then determined to come down before it should be broad daylight; but looking for the ladder, she perceived it was taken away. Upon this her heart failed her, and she fell down in a swoon; and as soon as she came to herself she began to lament; and, well knowing that it was the scholar's doing, to blame herself as well for giving the provocation as for putting

herself into his power afterwards. Looking then everywhere to see if there was any other way to come down, and finding there was not, she renewed her complaints saying to herself, "Unhappy wretch! what will thy brothers, relations, and all the people of Florence say, when it shall be known that thou wast found here naked? Thy character will be quite lost; and say what thou wilt in thy own vindication, the scholar will contradict it. Miserable woman! to lose both thy lover and thy honour at the same time!" Here her grief was such, that she was going to throw herself down headlong; but as the sun was now rising, she got to one corner of the wall to see if she could discover any shepherd's boy to send for her maid, when it happened that the scholar, who had been taking a nap upon the grass, awoke and saw her, and she him; on which he said, "Good morrow, madam, are the damsels come yet?" At this she fell a crying most bitterly, and desired he would come to her, that they might have some talk together. He readily obliged her in that, whilst she lying down with only her head appearing above the battlements, began to weep and say, "Sir, if I caused you to have a bad night, you are sufficiently revenged: for, though it is in July, yet I have been just starved to death, as I am naked; not to mention my grief for the trick I put upon you, and for my own folly in believing you, that I have almost cried my eyes out of my head. Therefore I entreat you, not out of any regard for me, for none is due from you; but for your own sake, as you are a gentleman, that you would esteem what you have already made me suffer a sufficient revenge, and that you would order my clothes to be brought, and let me come down; nor offer to take that away from me which it is not in your power to restore; I mean my honour. For if I denied you my company one night,

you may have it as many nights as you please in return for that one. Let this therefore suffice, and, like a man of worth, think it enough that you have had me in your power; nor set your wit against a woman. Where is the glory in an eagle's vanquishing a poor yielding dove? Then for Heaven's sake, and your own honour, shew me some pity!" The scholar found himself alternately influenced by two different motives; one while he was moved with compassion to see her in that distress, but revenge and fury at length gained the superiority, and he replied as follows:—"Madam, if my prayers (though unattended with tears, and such soothing expressions as yours) could have procured only a little shelter for me the night that I was dying in your court, all covered with snow, I could, in that case, easily hear now what you have to say: but you may remember that you were then with your gallant, entertaining him with my sufferings; let him come and bring your clothes, and the ladder; for he will be the best guardian of honour, who has so often had it in keeping. Why do not you call upon him then? It is his business more than any other person's, and if he do not succour you, whom will he regard? You may now see whether your love for him, or your great understanding, is able to deliver you from my folly; as you were pleased to make a doubt whether that folly or your love for him was greater. And concerning the offer of your person, I desire it not, neither could you withhold it from me if I did. No, keep it all for your lover; for my own part I have had enough of one night. You think to cajole me, by speaking of my great worth and gentility, and would have me believe that I shall lessen myself by this usage of you. But your flattery shall never blind my understanding, as your fair promises once did: I now know myself, and can say that I never learnt so much all

the time I was at Paris, as you taught me in one night. But, allowing that I am of a generous disposition, you are no proper object. Amongst savage beasts as you are, the end of vengeance is death, but with men, indeed, what you say should be sufficient. Therefore, although I am no eagle, yet, knowing you to be no dove, but rather a venomous serpent, I shall persecute you with all my might as an old enemy; though what I do cannot be called revenge, so properly as chastisement; for revenge ought to exceed the offence, given, whereas, considering how I was served by you, were I to take away your life, this would not be equal to it, nor even the lives of a hundred more such women as yourself. For what the devil are you better (setting aside a little beauty, which a few years will take away from you) than the paltriest chambermaid? And yet no thanks to you, that the life of a worthy gentleman was not lost, as you were pleased just now to call me, which may be of greater service to the world than a hundred thousand such lives as yours could ever be, whilst the world endures. Learn then what it is to mock and abuse people of understanding, and scholars, and be wiser for the time to come, if you happen to escape. But if you have such a desire to come, why do not you throw yourself to the ground. By breaking your neck, if it please Heaven, you may at once escape the punishment which you seem to undergo, and make me the happiest man in the world. So I have nothing more to say to you, but that as I have shewed you the way up to the tower, do you find a way, if you can, to come down as readily as you could insult me."

All the while the scholar was speaking was she weeping, whilst the time kept going on, and the sun rose higher and higher. And when he had made an end, she said, "Ah! cruel man; if that unhappy night still galls you,

and my crime appears so heinous, that neither my youth, my tears, nor my humblest entreaties can move you, yet let this last act of mine alone have some weight to lessen the force of your severity; consider how I put entire confidence in you, and entrusted you with my most secret designs, for without that you would never have had it in your power to revenge yourself of me, as you desired so much. Away, then, with all this fury, and pardon me this time; I am ready, if you will forgive me and set me at liberty, to abandon that unworthy young man, and to have you only for my lover and my lord. And though you make light of my beauty, esteeming it trifling and transitory, yet it is what other young gentlemen would love and value, and you may think otherwise. And, notwithstanding this cruel treatment, I can never think you could wish to see me dash my brains out before your face, when I was once so agreeable to you. For Heaven's sake, therefore, shew me some pity; the sun now waxes warm, and is as troublesome as the coldness of the night." The scholar then, who held her in talk only for his diversion, replied, "Madam, the confidence you reposed in me was out of no regard you had for me, but only to regain your lover; and you are mistaken if you think I had no other convenient way to come at my revenge: I had a thousand others, and had laid a thousand different snares to entrap you; so that, if this had not happened I must necessarily have taken you in some other; nor was there any one but would have been attended with as much shame and punishment to you as this. I have made choice of it, therefore, not because you gave me the opportunity, but that I might gain my end the sooner. And though they had all failed, yet had I my pen left, with which I would have so mauled you, that you should have wished a thousand times a day that you had never been born.

The force of satire is much greater than they are sensible of on whom it was never tried. I swear solemnly, then, that I would have written such things of you, that you should have pulled your very eyes out for vexation. As to the offer of your love, that is needless: let him take you, if he will, to whom you more properly belong, and whom I now love for what he has done to you, as much as before I hated him. You women are all for young flighty fellows, without considering that those people are never content with one mistress, but are roving always from one to another, as you have found by experience. Their greatest happiness is in gaining favours from you, and it is their utmost glory to publish them. Truly, you think your love is all a secret, and that nobody but your maid and I were ever acquainted with it, whilst his neighbourhood and yours both talk of nothing else; but it generally happens that the persons concerned are the last that hear of such things. Therefore, if you have made a bad choice, keep to it, and leave me, whom you have despised, to another lady whom I have made choice of, one of more account than yourself, and who knows better how to distinguish people. As to my being concerned for your death, if you please, you may make the experiment. But, as I suppose, you will scarcely humour me so far, so I now tell you, that if the sun begin to scorch, you may call to mind the cold you made me endure, and together they will make a proper temperature." The disconsolate lady, seeing that all these words tended to some cruel purpose, began to weep again, and say, "Behold, if nothing that concerns myself can move you to pity, yet let your love for that lady whom you say you have met with, who is wiser than I, and by whom you say you are beloved; let your regard, I say, for her prevail upon you to forgive me, and to bring me my clothes, that I

may dress myself and go down." The scholar fell a laughing at this, and seeing it was about noon, he replied, "Lo, I know not how to say to you nay, as you entreat me by that lady; then tell me where they are, and I will go for them that you may come down." She was a little comforted at this, and directed him to the place where she had laid them: so he went away, and ordered his servant to keep strict watch that nobody came to her relief till his return; and in the meantime, he went to a friend's house, where he dined, and laid himself down to sleep. The lady, conceiving some vain hopes of being released, had seated herself down in the utmost agonies, getting to that corner of the wall in which there was the most shade, where she continued, sometimes thinking, and then again lamenting; this moment in hopes, and the next altogether in despair of his return with the clothes; at last, musing of one thing after another, being quite spent with grief, and having had no rest the night before, she dropped asleep. The sun was now in the meridian, darting all its force directly upon her naked and most delicate body, as also upon her head; so that it not only scorched all the skin that lay exposed, but cleft it by little and little into chinks, and blistered it to that degree that it made her awake; when, finding herself perfectly roasted, and offering to turn about, it all seemed to rend asunder like a piece of burnt parchment that had been kept upon the stretch. Besides all this, her head ached to that degree as if it would rive in pieces, which was no wonder. Moreover, the reflection of the heat against her feet was so strong, that she could not rest anywhere, but kept crying and moving from place to place. And as there was no wind, the flies and hornets were constantly buzzing about her, striking their stings into the chinks of her flesh, and covering her over with wounds, whilst it was her whole employ-

ment to beat them off, still cursing herself, her lover, and the scholar. Being thus harassed by the heat, by insects, by hunger, but much more by thirst, and pierced to the heart by a thousand bitter reflections, she got up to see if anybody was near, resolving, whoever was within call, to beg their assistance; but even this comfort her ill fortune had denied her. The labourers were all gone out of the fields, on account of the heat, though it happened that nobody had been at work thereabouts all that day, being employed in threshing their corn at home, so that she heard nothing but the grasshoppers and saw the river Arno, which, by making her long for some of its water, instead of quenching, only added to her thirst. She saw also pleasant groves, cool shades, and countryhouses, which made her trouble so much the greater. What can be said more of this unhappy lady? She who, the night before, could, by the whiteness of her skin, dispel even the shade of night, was now all brown and spotted, so that she seemed the most unsightly creature that could be. Being thus void of all hope, and expecting nothing but death, towards the middle of the afternoon, the scholar happened to awake, when he called her to mind, and returned to the tower, sending the servant back, who was yet fasting, to get his dinner. As soon as she saw him, all weak and miserable as she was, she came and placed herself down by the battlements, and said, "O sir, you are most unreasonably revenged; for if I made you freeze almost with cold, one night in my court, you have roasted and burnt me for a whole day upon this tower, where I have been at death's door with hunger and thirst; I conjure you, therefore, that you would come up, and bestow that death upon me, which my heart will not let me inflict upon myself, and which I entirely covet, to put an end to that pain which I can no longer endure; or, if you deny me this favour that

you would send me up a little water to wash my mouth, my tears not being sufficient, such is the drought and scorching I feel.' The scholar was sensible, by her manner of speaking, how weak she was; he perceived, also, by what he saw of her body, how it was scorched and blistered; for that reason, therefore, as well as her entreaties, he began to have a little compassion, but said, 'Vile woman! thou shalt never meet with thy death from my hands; from thine own thou mayest if thou wilt; and just so much water will I give thee, as thou gavest me fire in my extremity. This only grieves me, that, whilst I was forced to lie in dung for my recovery, thou, nevertheless, wilt be cured with the coldness of perfumed rose water; and though I was near losing both limbs and life, yet thou, when stripped of thy skin, wilt appear with fresh beauty, like a serpent just uncased.'—'Alas!' quoth the lady, 'may only my enemies gain charms in that manner! But you, more cruel than any savage beast, how could you bear to torture me as you have done? What could I have expected worse from you, had I put all your relations to death in the cruellest manner imaginable? What greater punishment could be thought of for a traitor, who had been the destruction of a whole city, than to be roasted in the sun, and then devoured by flies? and not to give me a taste of a little water, whilst the vilest malefactors, when they are about to suffer, are not denied even wine.—Now I see you fixed in your barbarous resolution, nor any way moved with what I have suffered, I shall wait patiently for my death. The Lord have mercy on me, and look with a just eye on what you have done.'

With these words she withdrew to the middle of the place, despairing of her life, and ready to faint away a thousand times with thirst, where she sat lamenting her condition. But it being now towards the evening, and

he thinking she had suffered enough, made his servant take her clothes, wrapped up in his cloak, and he went with them to her house, where he found her maid sitting at the door, all sad and disconsolate for her long absence; and he said to her, "Pray, good woman, what is become of your mistress?"—"Sir," she replied, "I do not know: I thought to have found her in bed this morning, where I saw her last night, but she is neither to be found there nor anywhere else, nor do I know what is become of her. But can you give me any tidings of her?"—"I wish only," quoth he, "that thou hadst been along with her, that I might have taken the same revenge of thee that I have had of her. But depend upon it thou shalt never escape; I will so pay thee for what thou hast done, that thou shalt remember me every time thou shalt offer to put a trick upon anyone." And then he said to the servant, "Go, carry her clothes, and tell her she may go for her mistress if she has a mind." The servant accordingly delivered them with that message, and the girl knowing them again, and hearing what he said, was afraid she was murdered, and could scarcely help making an uproar about it; so she ran thither, full of grief. Now it happened that a labourer of hers had lost two of his hogs that day, and coming near to the tower to look for them, just as the scholar was departed, he heard the complaints that the poor creature was making, so he cried out, "Who makes that noise?" She immediately knew his voice, and called by his name, saying, "Go, I pray now, and desire my maid to come to me." The man then knew her, and said, "Alas, madam, who has brought you hither? Your maid has been looking for you all day long. But who could have thought of finding you in this place?" And he took the sides of the ladder, and placed them as they should be, binding them about with osiers:

and as he was doing this, the maid came, and being able to hold her tongue no longer, she wrung her hands, and fell a roaring out, "Dear madam, oh, where are you?" She, hearing her, replied, as well as she could, "Good girl, never stand crying, but make haste and bring me my clothes." She was pretty easy when she heard her speak, and jumping upon the ladder before it was quite made fit, by the man's help got upon the tower, when, seeing her lie naked there, burnt like a log of wood, and quite spent, she cried over her as if she had been dead. But the lady desired her to be quiet, and dress her; and understanding by her that nobody knew where she was but the persons who brought the clothes to her and the servant that was there, she was a little comforted, begging earnestly of them to keep it secret. The labourer now took her upon his back, as she had no strength to go, and brought her down safely in that manner; whilst the girl, following after with less caution than was necessary, slipped her foot, and falling down the ladder, broke her thigh, which occasioned her to make a most grievous outcry. The man, after he had set his lady on the grass, went to see what was the matter with the maid, and finding that she had her thigh broke, he laid her down by the lady, who, seeing this addition to her misfortunes, and that she was disabled from whom she expected most succour, began to lament afresh, and the man, unable to pacify her, fell a weeping likewise. But it being now about sunset, he took her to his own house, and brought two of his brethren and his wife back with him for the maid, whom they carried thither upon a table. Having given the lady some water to refresh her, and used all the kind comfortable words they could think of, she was brought to her own chamber; and the man's wife gave her a little bread soaked in water, and undressed and put her to bed. It

was then contrived that they should both be taken to Florence that night, and so they were. There the lady, who was never at a loss for invention, cooked up an artful story, which was believed by her brothers and sisters, and every other almost, viz., that it was all done by enchantment. Physicians were sent for, who, with a great deal of pain and trouble to her, and not without the loss of her whole skin several times over, cured her of a violent fever, and other accidents attending it; and they also set the girl's broken thigh. From that time she forgot her lover, and was more careful for the future, both in choosing a spark and in making her sport. The scholar, also, hearing what had happened to the girl, thought he had full revenge, and so no more was said about it. Thus the foolish lady was served for her wit and mockery, thinking to make a jest of a scholar, as if he had been a common person, never considering that the greatest part of them have the devil, as they say, in a string. Then take care, ladies, how you make your jest, but especially with scholars.

NOVEL VIII

Two neighbours are very intimate together; when one making very free with the other's wife, the other finds it out, and returns the compliment, whilst the friend is locked up in a chest all the time.

THE lady's sufferings seemed grievous to all that heard them; though their pity for her was the less, as they judged that she had in some measure deserved them; whilst the scholar was deemed most rigidly obstinate, and even cruel. But Pampinea having made an end, the queen ordered Flammetta to go on, who spoke as follows:—

‘As I suppose you have been under some concern for

the scholar's severity, it may be proper, I believe, to revive your drooping spirits with some more cheerful subject. Therefore I shall tell you a story of a certain young man, who received an injury with more mildness than he, and returned it with more moderation. Whence you may learn, that a person ought to be content if he gives people as good as they bring, without desiring an unreasonable vengeance, and far beyond what the provocation which he may have received requires.

Know then, that at Siena lived, as I have been told, two young wealthy citizens, the one named Spinellocchio Tanena, and the other Zeppa di Mino, near neighbours to each other, and as intimate together as if they had been brothers: and each had a very handsome wife. Now it happened that Spinellocchio going often to the other's house, whether he was at home or not, became too familiar at last with his wife, which continued some time before anybody perceived it. But Zeppa being at home one day, without her knowing it, Spinellocchio came to inquire for him, and being told by her that he was gone abroad, he began to make free with her as usual. This Zeppa was a witness to, and greatly troubled at; yet knowing that making a clamour would no way lessen the injury, but rather add to his shame, he began to think of some revenge, which should make no noise abroad, and with which he should yet be content. Resolving at length what to do, he went into the room after the friend was gone away, when he found her setting her head-dress a little to rights, and he said, "What are you doing, madam?" She replied, "Do not you see?"—"Yes, truly," quoth he, "and I have seen a great deal more than I could have wished." So he charged her with the thing, and she came to an open confession, as it was in vain to deny it, and began to weep and beg his pardon. He then said to her,

"You see you have been guilty of a very great crime; if you expect forgiveness from me, you must resolve to do what I shall enjoin you, which is to tell Spinelloccio that about the third hour to-morrow he must find some pretence of leaving me to go to you, when I will return home; and as soon as you hear me, do you make him go into that chest, and lock him up, and after you have done this I will tell you the rest. Have no doubt, however, about it, for I promise you I will do him no harm." She agreed to do so; and the next day, the two friends being together at that time, Spinelloccio, who had promised the lady to be with her then, said to Zeppa, "I am engaged to go and dine with a friend, whom I would not have wait for me; so fare you well." Quoth Zeppa, "It is a long while till dinner yet."—"Yes," replied the other, "but we have business to confer about, which requires me to be there in good time." So he left him, and took a little circuit, and went to the lady, and they had no sooner shut themselves in the chamber, but Zeppa returned; when she seeming to be very much frightened, made him go into the chest, as the husband had directed, and locked him up, and then came out to her husband, who asked her whether dinner was ready. She replied, "It will be soon."—"Then," quoth he, "as Spinelloccio is gone to dine with a friend, and left his wife at home by herself, do you call to her out of the window, to come and dine with us." She readily obeyed out of fear for herself, and Spinelloccio's wife came, after much entreaty, hearing that her husband was not to dine at home: when Zeppa shewed the greatest fondness towards her imaginable, and making a sign for his wife to go into the kitchen, he took her by the hand and led her into the chamber when he made fast the door. Upon this she began to say, "Alas, sir, what mean you to do? Is this what you invite me for? This

the regard you have for your friend?" Zeppa then drawing near to the chest where her husband was shut up, and holding her fast, he said, "Madam, before you utter any complaints, hear what I am going to tell you: I have loved your husband as if he had been my brother; and yesterday, though he knows nothing of it, I found out that he has as great an intimacy with my wife as he has with you. Now I respect him so much, that I intend to take no other revenge but what is agreeable to the quality of the offence. If you will not consent to this, be assured I shall revenge myself in such a manner that both he and you shall have cause to repent it."—"Well," quoth she, "since your revenge then is to fall upon me, I must be content. Do you only make my peace with your wife for what I do, in like manner as I am ready to forgive her." He promised to do that, and to make her a present also of a jewel; Spinelloccio, hearing what passed, was fit to burst with vexation; and had it not been that he was prevented by the fear of Zeppa, he would have clamoured against and have abused her, even shut up as he was. But considering again that he had given the provocation, and that Zeppa had reason for what he had done, and had behaved courteously and like a friend, he resolved to respect him more than ever. Coming out of the chamber then together, and she demanding the jewel which he had promised, he called his wife up, who said only this to her, "Now, madam, we may quit scores," and she spoke it with a smile. Quoth Zeppa then, "Here, open this chest," which she did, and he shewed Spinelloccio to his wife. Now it would be difficult to say which of the two was most confounded, whether the man at seeing his friend, and knowing that he was privy to what he had done, or the woman at seeing her husband and being conscious that he must have heard what had passed

over his head. "Behold," added Zeppa, "this is the jewel; I now give it you." Spinelloccio hereupon came out of the chest, and said, "Well, now we are even; and, as you said before to my wife, it is best for us to continue friends;" the other was content. So they dined very amicably together; and the same good understanding remained amongst them for the time to come.

NOVEL IX

Master Simon, the doctor, is imposed upon by Bruno and Buffalmacco, and made to believe that he is to be one of the company of rovers, and afterwards they leave him in a ditch.

THE communication of wives mentioned in the last novel occasioned a good deal of discourse, when the queen, knowing it was her turn, began in this manner:—

Well did Spinelloccio deserve what he met with from his friend Zeppa; and I think they are not to blame who put jests upon people of their own seeking, and such as they have really merited, though Pampinea was of a different opinion. Now as to Spinelloccio, it was no more than his due; but I purpose to speak of another, who would needs seek after it, and I commend those merry fellows for what they did.

This then was a certain doctor of physic who returned from Bologna to Florence, strutting in the robes belonging to his profession, though an ass would have become them as well as he. We frequently see your citizens, after they have been to study at Bologna, come back, one a lawyer, another a physician, a third a notary, with their long scarlet gowns and furs, with other things to make a figure; and to what purpose, every day's experience shews us. Amongst the rest was one Master

Simon da Villa, more rich in estate than learning, who appeared in his scarlet robes and ermine, calling himself a doctor of physic, and took a house in the Via del Cocomero. Now, this Master Simon being newly come thither, amongst his other notable qualities, had one, which was to enquire who every person was that he saw in the street; and, as though he was to have compounded his medicines according to the different gestures and manners of people, he observed and noted all. But he had cast his eye more particularly upon two painters, whom we have mentioned before, Bruno and Buffalmacco, who were always together, and lived in his neighbourhood. And perceiving that they had less regard for the world than other people, and were always more cheerful, he asked a great number of persons about them. Being told then by everyone that they were both poor men, and painters, he could not conceive how they could possibly live so merrily in their poverty, but supposed, as they were cunning fellows, that they must have some secret way of getting money; he had a mind therefore to become acquainted with one or both of them, and so he happened to fall in with Bruno, who soon seeing to the bottom of him, made the merest game of him that could be, and the doctor was wonderfully delighted always in hearing him talk. And having invited him several times to dinner, and thinking upon that account that he might discourse the more freely with him, he expressed, at length, his great wonder how he and Buffalmacco, who were both poor, could yet be so cheerful, and desired to know how they managed in that case. Bruno could not help laughing to himself, to hear the doctor put such a simple question, and resolving to give him a suitable answer, he said, "There are many people, master, that I would never tell that to; but as you are a friend, and I know will keep

it secret, I shall be less scrupulous with you. It is true we live as merrily as you imagine, or perhaps more so, and yet all we earn or possess will hardly find us salt to our broth, and I hope you do not think we steal: no, we go a roving, and bring home with us everything we can desire; and thus it comes, to pass that we live so merrily, as you observe." The doctor wondered what this going a roving could mean, and desired he would inform him, assuring him that he would never reveal the secret.

"Alas, Master Doctor, what a request is this! It is too great a secret, and I shall be ruined if I disclose it."—

"You may depend upon what I say," quoth the doctor, "it shall never go farther for me." He then, after making abundance of excuses, said, "Behold, master, the regard I have for your superexcellent understanding, and the confidence I repose in you is such that I can deny you nothing; therefore I will tell you, if you will swear to me, as you have just now promised, never to reveal it." The doctor swore and swore again. "You must know then, my dear master," quoth he, "that there was lately a necromancer in this city, called Michael Scotus, because he was a Scotchman, who had great honour shewed him by many of the gentry, few of whom are now living; and who, being about to leave this place, at their request, left it in charge with two of his disciples, that they should always be ready to serve those people who had honoured him. Some therefore they obliged in their love affairs, and some in other matters. At last being taken with the city, and the manners of the people, they resolved to make it their place of residence, when they contracted a friendship with divers persons, such as were agreeable to their own tempers, without considering whether those people were rich or poor at that time; and to please those friends they established a society of five-and-twenty

persons, who were to meet in some place that was fixed upon by them, twice at least in a month, when everyone was to say what he wanted, and they supplied him with it that very night. Now my friend and I, as a particular mark of favour to us, were admitted into this society. And it is wonderful to behold the costly furniture in the room where we sit, the tables spread in a most royal manner, with the great number of goodly servants, both men and women, at everyone's command; the basins, flagons, and cups also both of gold and silver, in which we eat and drink, and the great variety and plenty of victuals which are set before us. It is impossible for me to tell you what different musical instruments there are, and the delightful melody that we hear; or what numbers of wax candles are burnt at one of these feasts, any more than the immense quantities of sweetmeats consumed, and the very rich wines which are then drunk. Now I would not have you suppose, my dear friend, that we appear in the same dress that you behold. Now, there is not one of us seems less than an emperor, so richly are we attired. But of all our pleasures, that of having the ladies' company is the greatest, and who are brought to us, according to everyone's desire, from all quarters of the world. There you may see the great lady of Barbanicchia, the queen of Baschia, the wife to the great Sultan, the Empress of Osbech, the Ciancianfera of Norveca, the Semistante of Berlinzone, and the Scalpedra of Narsia. But what need have I to recount so many? There are all the queens in the world, even to Prester John's lady. Then observe, now: after we have eaten and drunk, and taken a dance or two, everyone selects that particular lady whom he had desired should be sent for: and you must know that the chambers we retire to are a perfect paradise, and no less odoriferous than a perfumer's shop;

the beds also that we lie in are as beautiful as the very best that belongs to the Duke of Venice. Do you then judge of our happiness. But none seem to fare better at these times than my friend and I; for he generally has the queen of France, and I have the queen of England, who are the two most beautiful ladies in the whole world, and they like no other person so well as us. Imagine, therefore, if we have not reason to be merry more than any other people; for, besides having the affection of two such queens, if we want a thousand or two thousand florins at any time, they immediately supply us. And this we call going a roving; for, as the corsairs rob and plunder everyone they meet, so do we, with this difference only, that they make no restitution, which we do as soon as it has served our purpose. Thus I have told you, master, what we mean by going a roving: you may easily see how great a secret it is, and so I need say no more to you upon that head."

The doctor, whose knowledge reached no farther, perhaps, than to cure children of the itch, gave the same credit to this story as he would have done to the most established truth, and became as desirous of being admitted into this society as he would have been of anything in the world: so he told the other that he did not wonder to see him so cheerful; and could scarcely refrain from asking the favour of being accepted among them, deferring it only till he could do it with a better grace. From that time therefore he was continually inviting him to dine and sup; and their intimacy was such, that the doctor scarcely knew how to live without him. And in return for these favours, Bruno, that he might not appear ungrateful, painted in his hall the whole story of Lent, an Agnus Dei over his chamber-door, and an urinal over the door to the street, that people who wanted his advice

might know where to have it. He painted also in a little gallery the battle of the cats and the rats; which the doctor thought a pretty fancy. And some nights when he happened to sup elsewhere, he would say at his return, "I was last night at our meeting, when, being displeased with the Queen of England I ordered the gumedra of the great Cham of Tartary to be brought me."—"Pray what does that word mean?" quoth the doctor; "I do not understand such names."—"I do not wonder at that," said Bruno; for Porcograsso and Vannacena take no notice of them."—"You mean," quoth the doctor, "Ipocrasso and Avicenna."—"Very likely," said Bruno; "but I know as little of those names as you know of mine. But gumedra is no more than empress. O! you would think her a fine woman; she would soon make you forget all your recipes and your plaisters." Talking frequently in this manner to excite him the more, and the doctor thinking, one night as he held the candle for him whilst he was painting, that he was now under sufficient obligations to grant any favours he should desire, he resolved to open his mind, as they were alone, and he said, "Bruno, there is nobody that I value so much as yourself; nor is there anything you could ask, but what I should be ready to oblige you in; then be not surprised at my making one request of you. You know, not long since, you were telling me of your meetings; now there is nothing I desire so much as to make one amongst you, and for a very good reason; for I will bring the prettiest girl into your company that you have seen a long time, to whom I have devoted my entire love; and you must know I once offered her ten pieces, and she refused them. Tell me then, I pray you, what I must do to be admitted, and do you take care that I be so, and I promise that you shall always find me your true and trusty friend. You may

observe that my person is proper and good, and I am a doctor of physic too, and perhaps you have none of that profession among you; moreover I know a great many pretty things, and can sing divers pretty songs, as you shall hear." Here he began one, whilst Bruno had much ado to keep his countenance, and after he had done he asked him what he thought of it. "Most certainly," replied he, "the best violin is no way comparable."—"Then," quoth the doctor, "to this and many other qualifications too tedious to relate at present, I may add, that my father was a gentleman, though he lived in a country village and my mother of the Vallecchio family. Besides, there is no physician in Florence has better clothes, or a more complete library than myself; and I give you my word, that if you be sick at any time I will cure you for nothing." Bruno, to make him believe that he was more intent upon his painting, replied, "Pray, sir, snuff the candle, and let me finish these rats' tails, and then I will talk with you." When, seeming much displeased with the request, he said, "Oh, sir, I have received great favours from you, I must confess, and there is nobody I would serve sooner; but you ask too much. Now though I cannot directly oblige you in what you desire, yet I can put you into a method whereby I am very sure you will succeed."—"Then tell me," quoth the doctor; "you don't know how well I can keep a secret. Signor Guasparruolo da Saliceto, when he was a judge, entrusted me with many things."—"Well," quoth Bruno, "if he trusted you, I may do it more securely. The means you are to use are as follow: we have a captain and two counsellors, who are chosen every six months, and next Christmas Buffalmacco will certainly be the captain, and I one of the counsellors. Now it is in the captain's power to admit you if he pleases, therefore you should immediately

get acquainted with him. I know he will be very fond of you, as he is of all men of understanding; and after you have been often in his company, and ingratiated yourself with him, you may then ask the favour, and he will not know how to refuse you. I have given him a character of you already, and he has conceived a great regard for you, and when this is done you may leave the rest to me."—"You say well," quoth the doctor, "if he delights in people of sense and learning he will not miss of his aim; I have enough of both to furnish a whole city, and yet leave sufficient for myself." When the matter was thus agreed, Bruno went and related the whole to Buffalmacco, who was very impatient to let the doctor have what he sought for. Now the doctor, who was eager to be concerned, found it no hard matter to get acquainted with him; and he began to treat them, both noon and night, with everything that was nice and elegant, so that they lived entirely upon him; telling him at the same time that it was a favour they would shew to nobody else. At length, when he thought it a fit time, he made the same request to Buffalmacco, that he had done before to Bruno, who seemed much concerned, and made a great clamour at his friend, threatening to break his head for betraying those secrets to the doctor. But the doctor excused him very much, protesting that he had it from another person.

On this he seemed a little more pacified, and said, "Dear doctor, I plainly see you have been at the university, and know how to keep your mouth shut upon occasion; and I farther tell you, that you have not learned your A, B, C, in the manner most blockheads do: moreover, if I am not mistaken, you were born on a Sunday; and though Bruno tells me that your study has been physic, yet to me it seems as if you had learned

to captivate men, which you do by your great sense and manner of speaking, far beyond any that ever I saw." Here the doctor interrupted him, and said, turning to Bruno, "This is to have to do with people of understanding; there are few that could have penetrated into the depth of my designs so easily as this worthy man has done. You did not take my meaning half so soon; but let him know what I said upon your telling me that he delighted in people of sense.—Do not you think I spoke truth at that time?"—"No doubt," replied the other. Then said he to Buffalmacco, "What would you have said, had you seen me at Bologna, where were none, either great or small, doctor or scholar, but doated on me, so much did they profit by my wise discourses? Nay, more than that, I never spoke but they all laughed, so highly were they pleased to hear me. And when I came away, they expressed the greatest concern imaginable at parting with me, and to encourage me to continue with them, offered me the sole privilege of reading lectures on medicine to all the students. But I refused it, being resolved to come and live here upon my estate, which is very considerable."—"Well," said Bruno to his friend, "what think you now? You would not believe me when I told you there was not a physician in all this country could cast an ass's water better than himself; nor is there his fellow, I will maintain it, from this place to Paris. Go, then, and use all your endeavours to gratify him in his request."—"Bruno is in the right," quoth the doctor, "but here nobody knows me; they are all a parcel of ignorant stupid people; but I wish you had seen how I appeared among the doctors."—"Indeed, Master Doctor," quoth Buffalmacco, "you know a great deal more than I could have thought; in which respect speaking unto you as becomes me to a person of you

understanding and parts, I dare assure you that you shall be one of our society." This promise made him increase his favours towards them, and they were extremely diverted with his great simplicity, promising that he should have the Countess di* Civillari for his mistress, who was the goodliest and sweetest creature in the whole world. The doctor asked what countess she was? "Oh," quoth Buffalmacco, "she is a very great lady, and there are few houses but where she has some jurisdiction. Her officers are all about, and store of her great barons are to be seen everywhere, namely, Tamagnin† della Porta, Don Meta, Manico di Scopa, and the rest, whose names have escaped me. You shall leave your old mistress then for this lady, of whom we will give you the full possession."

Now the doctor, who had been brought up at Bologna, understood not the meaning of these Florentine terms, and so was pleased with the hopes of enjoying what they had promised him. In a little time they brought him the news of his being admitted. The day therefore, that they were to have their meeting he had them both to dine with him, and after dinner he asked them in what manner he had best go to this assembly. When Buffalmacco replied, "It behoves you, master, to proceed resolutely, otherwise you may receive an impediment, and do us great injury. Now you shall hear in what manner I would have you do so. You must contrive to be upon one of those raised tombs in New St. Maria's churchyard, at the time of people's going to sleep, with your best gown on, in order to make a figure amongst us at your first appearance, and to verify our character

*This means no more than a common jakes, or the Temple of Cloacina.

†These are all different words for the same thing.

of you to the countess, who intends to make you a knight of the bath, at her own expense. There you must wait till we send for you. And, that you may be apprised of everything, I must acquaint you that there will be a black-horned beast, of no great stature, come for you, capering and dancing about to terrify you; but, after he finds you are not to be daunted, he will gently come near you, when you may descend from the tomb: and without thinking of heaven, or any of the saints, mount boldly upon his back; and, as soon as you shall be seated, lay your hands upon your breast, without touching him: he will then move easily along, and bring you to us: but if you mention anything of a prayer, or express the least fear, he will throw you down into some noisome place or other; so that you had better not attempt it, unless you can depend upon your own courage, for you may do us a great deal of mischief, and yourself no good." Said the doctor, "You do not know me yet; because I wear a gown, you think me faint-hearted. If you did but know what I have done some nights at Bologna, when I went with some of my companions to visit the girls there, you would be surprised. One night, I assure you, I met with a little, young baggage, who refused to go along with us, when I dragged her by force a considerable way, and afterwards she went willingly enough. Another time, I remember having nobody with me but my boy, that I went through the friar's churchyard, after evening prayers, when a woman had been buried there that night, and I was not at all afraid. Never fear, therefore, but I will be courageous and resolute as you can desire. To do you the greater honour, too, I intend to go in the scarlet robes in which I commenced doctor, and you will see what joy there will be in your assembly at my coming, and if I shall not go near to be immediately

declared your captain. You shall see also how the case will go after I have made my appearance, in regard that the countess having as yet never seen me, is so enamoured with me, that she will make me a knight of the bath; and as to supporting the honour, that you may leave to me."

"Very well spoken," said Buffalmacco; "but take care you do not impose upon us, and so not come at all, or be not found there when we send for you; and I give you this caution because the weather is cold, and you doctors love to take care of yourselves."—"No," quoth the doctor, "I am one of those hardy ones that have no regard for the weather, and if I have occasion to rise in the night, I only put a fur gown over my doublet; so you need make no doubt about it." As soon as they were departed, and it was night, he made some excuse or other to his wife, and got away his best gown, which he put on when he thought it was the time, and went and stood upon one of the grave-stones, it being a very cold night, expecting the beast. Whilst Buffalmacco, who was pretty lusty, had procured a vizard mask, such as they used formerly in farces, and he covered himself with a black fur gown, which was turned inside out, that he seemed like a bear, only that his mask had two horns and so he had more the appearance of the devil. Being thus equipped, he went to the square by New St. Maria's, Bruno following at a distance, to see how they went on. And as soon as he found that his doctor was there, he fell a skipping and roaring about as if he were mad, which put our physician into a most terrible fright, and he began to wish heartily that he was at home again. But as he was come out upon this affair, he resolved to accomplish it, so urgent was his desire to behold the wonders which they had been relating. At last, after Buffalmacco had

played his tricks for some time, he grew a little more quiet, and drew near to the stone where the doctor was, and where he stood out of harm's way; whilst he, who shook all over for fear, was in doubt whether he should mount or not. Till apprehending that some mischief might befall him if he did not, this latter fear expelled the former, and coming down from the tomb, he mounted upon the beast, praying God to help him, and laid his hands upon his breast, as he had been directed. Buffalmacco then began to shape his course towards St. Maria della Scala, and from thence conducted him, groping all the way in the dark, as far as the ladies of Ripole. Hereabouts were divers ditches, made by the husbandmen to empty the Countess di Civillari into, for the sake of manuring their lands afterwards. Buffalmacco then being come to the brink of one of them, and putting his hand under one of the doctor's feet, pitched him headlong in, when he began to make a terrible noise, stamping and roaring about, and so went back by St. Maria della Scala, towards Prato d'Ogni Santi, where he met with Bruno, who had been forced to leave him, because he could not hold from laughing, and both turned back once more, to see how the poor doctor would behave in that condition; who, finding himself in such a place, laboured with all his might to get released, but falling sometimes on one side, and sometimes on the other, he was all over imbrued; till at length, with the utmost difficulty, he made shift to scramble out with the loss of his hood. When he cleaned himself as well as he could, and not knowing what other course to take, he went home, and knocked at the door till they let him in. The door was no sooner shut again, but Bruno and Buffalmacco were there listening to hear what a reception the doctor would meet with from his wife, who met him with all the bad language

she could devise, saying, "You are in a fine condition, truly—what, you have been with some other woman, and so had a mind to make a figure in your scarlet robes!—Am not I enough for you? I wish you had been choked when you fell into all that nastiness. Here is a fine physician indeed! who is not content with his own wife, but must be running out at night after other women." With these and such like words she rallied him till midnight, when she had him washed and made clean. The next morning Bruno and Buffalmacco came with their bodies all painted over with blue spots, as if they had been beaten, to his house, when they found him just risen out of bed, and everything in a sad condition. He seeing them coming went and wished them a good morning; but they seeming much out of temper, replied, "We wished you had been hanged for a sorry man as you are; we have been near losing our lives, meaning to do you honour, being beaten like two asses, and in danger of being excluded our assembly, where we would have had you introduced. If you will not believe us, pray behold our bodies:" so taking him into a corner, where there was not much light, they just opened their bosoms for him to see, and immediately buttoned them up again. The doctor endeavoured to have excused himself, and was telling them of his misfortunes, and where he had been thrown. When Buffalmacco said, "I wish you had been thrown from the bridge into the river; what had you to do with prayers? Were not you told of that beforehand?"—"Indeed," quoth he, "I used no prayers."—"How do you say! no prayers!" answered the others; "I am sure our messenger told us that you prayed and trembled like an aspen leaf. We will never be served so again, either by you or anyone else; nor must you expect ever any more to have such favours

shewed you." The doctor here began to ask pardon, entreating them not to resent it; and lest they should expose him, by making it public, he entertained them at his house more than ever. And thus our doctor was taught something more than he had learned at Bologna.

NOVEL X

A certain Sicilian damsel cheats a merchant of all the money he had taken for his goods at Palermo. Afterwards he pretends to return with a greater stock of goods than before; when he contrives to borrow a large sum of money of her, leaving sham pledges for her security.

How much they were all diverted with the queen's novel it is needless to say; and it being now ended, Dioneus began in this manner:—

It is certain that those stratagems are the more entertaining, the more cunning and artful the person is who is imposed upon by them. Therefore, though the other novels have been agreeable enough, yet I think to relate one that will please you better; inasmuch as the lady outwitted was a greater mistress of those devices than any of the persons before-mentioned.

It was formerly a custom, and may be still, in seaport towns, for all the merchants that come thither to bring their goods into a common warehouse, under the keeping of the community, or else the lord of the town; when they give a particular account, in writing, of the nature and value of them: the goods are kept under lock and key, and the account entered in a register, for the merchants to pay the accustomed dues, as all or part are sold, and delivered out of the warehouse. From this register the brokers are informed both of the quantity and quality of the goods, and also who are the owners, to

treat with for them, either by exchange, truck, or sale. This was the way at Palermo, as well as in many other places, where was likewise great plenty of handsome women, not overstored with modesty. And yet, to all appearance, many of them were grand ladies, and pretended to a character: who, making it their whole employ to shave, and even skin, such men as fell into their clutches, no sooner did they see a strange merchant, but they would inform themselves from the register, both of the nature and value of his goods; when, by their amorous wiles, they would endeavour to bring him to their lure, which they often did; and some have been choused out of part of their goods; others have lost ship, goods, and body, to boot; so finely have they been touched over by these cunning shavers. Now it happened not long since, that a certain young Florentine, called Niccolo da Cigniano, though more usually Salabaetto, arrived there by way of factor, with as much woollen cloth, which had been left unsold at the fair of Salerno, as might be worth five hundred florins; and having given in his account to the officers, and laid his goods safely up in the warehouse, he was in no great haste to dispatch his business, but took a turn up and down the town to amuse himself. Being a personable young man, one of these female barterers that we have been speaking of, called Madam Jiancofore, having heard something of his affairs, soon took notice of him, which he perceiving, and supposing she was some great lady who had taken a fancy to him, resolved to conduct the affair with the utmost caution; so without saying a word to anyone, he used to take his walks frequently by her house. She was soon sensible of this, and when she thought his affection towards her fully secured, under pretence of languishing for him, she sent one of her women to him, an adept in that sort of

business, who told him, with tears in her eyes, that her lady was so in love with him, that she could get no rest night or day; therefore she desired very much, whenever he would do her that favour, to meet her at a bagnio; and with these words she took a ring out of her purse, and gave it him as a token. Salabaetto was overjoyed at the message; so taking the ring, and looking carefully at it, and kissing it, he put it upon his finger, and said, "If your lady loves me as you say, be assured she has not misplaced her affection, for I love her more than I do my own life, and shall be ready to meet her at any time and place she shall appoint." She had no sooner reported this answer, but she was posted back to tell him that her mistress would meet him at such a bagnio that evening. Accordingly he went thither at the time fixed, and found it engaged for that lady's use. He had not waited long before two women slaves came, the one loaded with a fine cotton mattress and the other a hamper full of things. This mattress they laid upon a bed in one of the chambers, covering it with a pair of sheets, curiously edged with silk, and over the whole was spread a rich Grecian counterpane, with two pillows, worked in a most delicate manner; after which they went into the bath, and cleaned it very carefully. The lady now came attended by two slaves, and after some sighs and embraces, she said, "My dear Tuscan, there is nobody could have obtained this favour from me but yourself;" so they went into the bath together, and with them two of their slaves who washed them with soap, scented with musk and gilliflowers. The other slaves then brought two fine sheets, smelling of nothing but roses, in one of which they wrapped Salabaetto, and in the other the lady, and carried them to bed, where, after they had lain some time to perspire, those sheets were taken away, and they

were left between the others. After this, thy took out of the hamper silver canisters of rose, orange, and jessamine water, which they sprinkled upon the bed, and presented them with sweetmeats and rich wines, by way of collation: he all the time thought himself in paradise wishing heartily that they would go away, and leave him in possession of his mistress. At length they left a taper light in his chamber, and departed. After they had lain a convenient time, the servants returned, and put on their clothes, and when they had taken some more refreshment of wine and sweetmeats and washed their hands and faces with orange water, as they were going to depart, she said, "If it be agreeable to you, I should be vastly pleased if you would come and sup with me, and stay all night." When he, supposing himself as dear to her as her own heart, replied, "Madam, whatever is pleasing to you, is entirely so to me; now, therefore, and at all times, I shall be ready to obey your commands." So she went home, and had her apartment richly set out, and provided a costly supper for him; who accordingly went thither as soon as it was dark, and was very elegantly received; and after supper they went into a chamber scented with costly odours, where was a most noble bed, and everything besides that was grand and sumptuous. All which made him conclude that she was some very great and rich lady. And though he had heard various reports about her, yet he would not believe them for the world; nay, had he been convinced of her tricking other people, he could never have been made to believe that she would serve him so. He stayed with her then all that night, and the next morning she made him a present of a fine wrought belt and purse, saying to him, "My dear Salabaetto, fare you well; and from henceforth be persuaded, as you are entirely to my good liking, that my

person and all I possess are at your service." He then took his leave with great satisfaction, and went to the place where the merchants usually resort. And continuing his visits to her without any expense, and becoming every day more enamoured, it happened that he sold his cloth and gained considerable profit; which she being immediately apprised of, not from himself, but other hands, as he was with her one night, she seemed to express a more than ordinary fondness for him, and would need make him a present of two beautiful silver cups, worth about thirty florins, which he refused to accept, having had divers things of her before, to the value of thirty more without giving her the worth of a single farthing. At last, after she had set him all on fire, as it were, with this extraordinary love and liberality, she was called out by one of her slaves, as she had contrived beforehand, when she returned in a little time full of tears, and throwing herself down upon the bed, she seemed to grieve most immoderately. Salabaetto was under the greatest astonishment, and taking her in his arms, he began to say, "Alas! my dear heart, what is that has happened to you thus suddenly? Tell me, my life, I entreat you, do." She at last replied, "My dear lord, I know neither what to do, nor what to say. I have just received letters from Messina, wherein my brother informs me, that, though I pawn all I have, I must, without fail, remit a thousand florins of gold in eight days; otherwise he must inevitably lose his head. Now I find it impossible to raise the money upon so short time; had I but fifteen days, I could procure it from a place whence I could command even a greater sum; or I could sell some of my lands: but as it cannot now be done, I wish I had been in my grave rather than live to know this trouble;" and she continued weeping, whilst Salabaetto whose love had taken away

his understanding, thinking that her tears were real, and what she said was true, made answer: "Madam, I am unable to furnish you with a thousand but with five hundred I can, as you think you will be able to pay me in fifteen days: and it is your good fortune that I happened to sell my cloth yesterday, otherwise I could not have spared you one farthing."—"Alas" quoth the lady, "then have you been in want of money? Why did not you speak to me? For though I have not a thousand, I have always a hundred or two to spare for you. You deprive me of the assurance to accept your proffered favour." He quite captivated with these fine speeches, made answer, "Madam, you shall have it nevertheless; had I been in the like circumstance I should have applied to you."—"Dear me!" she replied, "I am convinced of your most constant and entire love towards me, to supply me with such a sum of your own accord: I was yours before, and now am much more so; nor shall I ever forget that it is to you I am indebted for my brother's life. But Heaven knows I accept it very unwillingly, considering that you are a merchant, and must have occasion for a great deal of ready money; but being constrained by necessity and assured also that I shall be able to return it at your time, I will make use of it and I will pawn all my houses rather than fail in my engagement to you." With these words she fell down, weeping, in his arms. He did all he could to comfort her, and stayed with her all that night; and the next morning, to shew what a liberal lover he was, and without waiting for any farther request, brought her the five hundred florins, which she received with laughter at her heart, though with tears in her eyes, he looking only to her simple promise. But after she had got the money, the times were soor changed; and whereas before he had free admittance to her as often as he pleased, now

reasons were given that he could not get sight of her once in seven times that he went; nor did he meet with those smiles and caresses, nor with the same generous reception, as before. Moreover, the time limited was past, and one or two months over, and when he demanded his money he could get nothing but words by way of payment. Whilst he, now sensible of the arts of this wicked woman, as well as of his own want of sense, and knowing that he had no proof against her, but what she herself would please to acknowledge, there being nothing of any writing between them, was ashamed to make his complaint to anyone, both because he had notice of it before, and also on account of the disgrace he must undergo for his monstrous credulity; so he continued uneasy and disconsolate to the last degree. And receiving frequent letters from his masters, in which he was required to get bills of exchange for the money, and remit to them, he resolved, to prevent a discovery, to leave the place; and he embarked on board a little vessel not far from Pisa, as he should have done, but for Naples.

At that time lived there Signor Pietro dello Canigiano, treasurer to the Empress of Constantinople, a very subtle, sensible man, and a great friend to Salabaetto and his masters: to whom he made his case known, requesting his assistance in getting himself a livelihood, and declaring that he would never more return to Florence. Canigiano, who was much concerned for him, replied, "You have done very ill; very ill indeed have you behaved yourself; small is the regard which you have shewed to your principles, too much have you expended upon your pleasures. It is done, however, and we must remedy it as well as we can." Then, like a prudent man, he considered what course it was best to take, and acquainted him with it. Salabaetto was pleased with the scheme, and

resolved to follow it; and having some money of his own, and Canigiano lending him some, he made divers bales of goods well packed together, and procured about twenty casks for oil, which he filled, and returned with them to Palermo, where he entered them as on his own account in the register, with that value he pleased to put upon them; and he laid them up in the warehouse, declaring that they were not to be meddled with till more goods of his should arrive, which he was daily expecting. The lady hearing of this, and understanding that the goods he had already there were worth two thousand florins, and that what remained to come were rated at three thousand more, began to think that she had as yet got too little from him; therefore she thought of returning the five hundred to come in for a better part of the five thousand, and accordingly sent for him. He went with malice in his heart, whilst she, seeming to know nothing of what he had brought appeared wonderfully pleased at seeing him, and said; "Now, were you really vexed because I failed giving you your money at your time?" He smiled, and replied, "In truth, madam, I was a little uneasy, since I would pluck my very heart out if I thought it would please you; but you shall see how much I was offended. Such is my regard for you, that I have sold the greatest part of my estate, and have brought as much merchandise as is worth two thousand florins, and I expect from the Levant what will amount to three thousand more; resolving to have a warehouse, and to abide here, for the sake of being near you, as I think nobody can be happier in their love than I am in yours." She then replied, "Now trust me, Salabaetto, whatever redounds to your benefit is extremely pleasing to me, as I hold you dearer than my own life; and I am glad you are returned with an intention of staying, because I hope to have a great deal of your

company; but it is fit that I excuse myself to you, in that sometimes you came to see me, and were not admitted, and at other times not so cheerfully received as before; and besides this, for my not paying you the money according to promise. Now you must know that I was there in very great trouble, and upon such occasions, be one's love what it will, one cannot look so pleasantly as at another time: I must tell you likewise that it is a very difficult thing for a lady to raise a thousand florins, people impose upon us in that manner, without ever minding what they promise; so that we are forced to deceive others. Hence it is, therefore, and for no other reason that I did not return you your money; but I had got it ready just as you went away, and would have sent it after you, had I known where to have found you; but as I did not, I kept it carefully for you." So sending for a purse, which had the very same florins in it, that he had delivered to her, she put it into his hand saying, "See, and count if there are five hundred." Never was Salabaetto so overjoyed as at that present time; so telling them over, and finding there were just five hundred, he replied, "Madam, I am convinced that what you say is true, but let us talk no more about it, you have done your part, and I assure you, upon that account, as well as the love I have for you, that whatever sum of money you shall want at any time, if it be in my power to supply you, you may command it; as you may soon see upon trial." Thus their love being renewed, in word at least, he continued artfully his visits as before; whilst she shewed him all the respect and honour that could be, expressing the same fondness as ever. But he, willing to return measure for measure, being invited one night to sup with her, went thither all sad and melancholy, like a person in despair. When she kissing and embracing him, would needs know

the cause of all that sorrow. He having suffered her to entreat him for some time, at last said, "I am undone for the ship which had the goods on board, that I have been expecting, is taken by the corsairs of Monaco, and put up at the ransom of ten thousand florins, one thousand of which falls on my share, and I have not one farthing to pay it with; for the five hundred which you paid me, I sent instantly to Naples, to lay out in cloth to be sent hither, and were I to offer to sell the goods I have here, as it is improper time, I must do it to very great loss, and being a stranger, I have nobody to apply to; so that I know neither what to say nor what to do, and if the money be not sent immediately, they will be carried into Monaco, and then they will be past redemption."

She was under great concern at hearing this, reckoning a good part of it as lost to herself; and considering how to prevent the goods being sent to Monaco, at last she said, "Heaven knows how much my love for you makes me grieve for your misfortune. But to what purpose is that? Had I the money, I would instantly give it you, but I have not. Indeed there is a person that lent me five hundred florins the other day, when I was in distress, but he expects an exorbitant interest, viz., no less than thirty in the hundred. If you will have the money of this man, you must give him good security. Now I am ready to pledge my goods here, and pass my word as far as that will go to serve you; but how will you secure the remainder? Salabaetto knew the reason of her proposing this piece of service, and that she herself was to lend the money; so being well pleased, he returned her thanks, and said, that let the interest be what it would, his necessity was such that he must agree to it; then he added, that he would make a security by his goods which he had in the warehouse, and that they should be assigned over

in the register to the person who advanced the money, but that he would keep the key, as well for the sake of shewing them, if any body should want to see them, as to prevent their being exchanged or meddled with. The lady replied, "You speak extremely well, the security is sufficient;" and at the time appointed she sent for a broker, in whom she put great confidence, when she told him what he was to do, and gave him the money, which he carried straightway to Salabaetto, who assigned over his goods to him at the custom-house, and they were entered in his name; thus they parted, giving each other counter-security. Salabaetto now immediately embarked with the fifteen hundred florins and went to Pietro dello Canigiano at Naples, from whence he remitted to his masters at Florence the entire account of what he had made of their cloth; and having paid Pietro and every one else what he owed them, they laughed very heartily together at the trick put upon his Sicilian mistress. From thence, resolving to trade no longer, he went to Florence. In the mean time, the lady, finding Salabaetto was not at Palermo, began to wonder, and grew half suspicious; and, after waiting two months, and hearing nothing of his return, she made the broker force open the warehouse when first she tried the casks, which she supposed had been full of oil, and found them full of salt water, with a small quantity of oil at the top, just at the bung-hole. She then looked into the bales of goods, only two of which had cloth in them; and the rest were stuffed with coarse hurds of hemp; that, in short, the whole was not worth two hundred florins. So she finding herself thus imposed upon was under great affliction for a long time with regard to the five hundred florins that she had restored, and much more for the thousand she had lent, often saying, that whoever had to do with a Tuscan had need of all

their eyes about them. Thus she became a common jest afterwards, having found to her cost that some people have as much cunning as others.

After Dioneus had made an end, Lauretta, knowing that her reign was concluded, and having commended the good advice of Pietro Canigiano, as appeared by its effect, and the sagacity of Salabaetto, no less to be admired in putting it in execution, took the crown from her own head, and placed it upon Emilia saying, "Madam, I do not know whether you will make a pleasant queen or not, but a pretty one I am sure you will. See then that your works correspond with your beauty."

Emilia, not so much for honour conferred upon her, as for hearing herself commended on account of that which ladies most of all covet, blushed a little, seeming like the opening of a rose in the morning; but after she had turned her eyes down to the ground, till the redness was something gone off, and having given her orders to the master of the household, concerning what she would have done, she began in this manner: "We often see, ladies, that after oxen have laboured at the yoke all the day, they are then turned loose, and permitted to graze through the forests at their pleasure. It is also certain that gardens which have a variety of trees in them, are more delightful than groves, where nothing is seen but oaks: for which reasons considering how many days we have been confined to certain laws, it may be convenient for us all to take a little liberty, to refresh and gain strength against our returning to the yoke. I shall, therefore, give you no particular subject for to-morrow, but leave you all to please yourselves, being of opinion that a variety of things will be no less entertaining than keeping strictly to one. My successor, if he pleases, may keep to the old laws." She then gave them leave to depart till supper-

time. The queen's order was generally approved, and they went to their different amusements. The ladies made nosegays and chaplets of flowers and the gentlemen sat down to play, or else to sing; and thus they were employed till supper, when they placed themselves by the fountain-side, and supped very merrily together. Afterwards they began to dance and sing, when the queen, to pursue the method of her predecessors, besides what many of them had voluntarily given, ordered Pamphilus to sing a song, which he did as follows:

SONG

I

Such the abundant am'rous joy
With which my heart elate hath been,
As no restraint, no bounds to know,
And flushing in my face is seen!

II

In vain my feeble song essays
To paint what cannot be expressed ;
And which more fully to have known,
Would bring but jealousy at best.

III

Could I have formed a wish like this,
My utmost hope have reached so far,
To clasp her yielding taper waist,
And press my eager lips to her?

Everyone joined in Pamphilus's song; nor was there any among them but made more conjectures than were necessary, to find out what he meant to conceal; and

THE DECAMERON

though they imagined different things, yet none of them was in the right. But the queen, seeing the song was ended, and that the company were disposed to rest, gave orders for them all to retire to bed.

THE NINTH DAY

AURORA had now changed the heavens from blue to purple, and the flowers along the meadows began to open to the rising sun, when the queen arose with all her company; and they took a walk together to a grove, not far from the palace, where they saw a variety of creatures, such as deer, goats, &c., so secure from the hunter, by reasons of the then raging pestilence, that they stood gazing upon them as if they had been tame. Upon a nearer approach first to one, and then to another, as if they meant to play with them, they were greatly delighted to see them run and skip about them. But the sun being now risen to a good height, it was thought convenient to return. They had all oak garlands on, with their hands full of flowers, or sweet-smelling herbs; so that whoever had seen them must needs have concluded, either that death would not be able to vanquish them, or at least that he would find them no otherwise than merry. In this manner they came step by step to the palace, laughing, joking, and singing all the way, where they found everything in order; and, after reposing themselves awhile, they sung half a dozen songs before they would sit down to table. They then washed their hands, and dinner was served up; when, being sufficiently regaled, and after indulging in a dance or two, the queen gave leave for such as were so disposed to go to rest. At the usual hour they met at the usual place, when the queen, looking on Philomena, desired her to begin for that day, which she did in this manner:—

NOVEL I

Madam Francesca having two lovers, and liking neither of them, rids herself of both by making one go and lie down in a person's grave, and sending the other to fetch him out.

I AM well pleased, madam, as it is your will, to run the first ring, in this free and open field of relating novels in which your courtesy has placed us, not doubting, if I perform well, but that they who come after will do as well or better. It has often been made appear in our discourses, how great the force of love is; nor do I think the subject would be exhausted were we to talk of nothing else from year's end to year's end: because it hath led its votaries not only into various dangers of death, but even into the very mansions of the dead. I purpose to add a story to what has been already given, wherein, besides the power of love, will be shewed the contrivance of a certain lady to rid herself of two lovers, who were neither of them to her liking.

In the city of Pistoia there was a handsome widow lady, whom two of our townsmen, who were banished thither from hence, were desperately in love with, and who used their utmost endeavours to gain her affection; the one named Rinuccio Palermino, and the other Alessandro Chiarmontesi. Now this lady, who was called Francesca de Lazari, had been often solicited by them, when she listened too hastily to their importunities; and being afterwards desirous to quit herself of those engagements, without being able to do it, it came into her head at last to ask a piece of service of them, which, though possible to be done, she supposed neither would undertake, and that, from their not complying, she might have a just pretence for turning them adrift. The thing was this:

The very day that she first thought of it, a man was buried at Pistoia, who, though of a good family, was reputed to have been one of the vilest wretches that ever was born: moreover, he was so deformed, that they who did not know him would have been frightened at the first sight of him. This circumstance, she thought, fell in very aptly with her design; therefore, she said to her maid:

“Thou knowest what plague and trouble I have had with these two Florentines; now I have a mind to have neither the one nor the other. In order, then, to shake them off, I intend to make a trial of them in a certain affair which I am confident they will refuse to do, and thou shalt hear what it is. Last night, thou knowest was interred in the churchyard belonging to the lesser friars, Scannadio (for so was the man called whom we have been speaking of), who, even when alive, was frightful to most people. Do thou go, then, privately to Alessandro, and say that thy mistress orders thee to acquaint him that the time is now come when he may be secure of her love, in the following manner:—That one of her relations, for a reason which he will know afterwards, is to bring that man’s corpse to her house, which she is much averse to; therefore she begs it as a favour of him, that he would go, about the beginning of the night, into the grave, and put the man’s shroud on, waiting there till the persons come to take him away, which he is to suffer him to do, without speaking a word, and to let him carry him to her house where she will be ready to receive him; and the rest he may leave to her. If he agrees to it, it is well; but if he refuse, charge him at his peril not to come any more in her sight, or to trouble her with his messages. After this, thou must go to Rinuccio, and tell him that thy mistress is ready to gratify him upon condition that he

will do her one piece of service, which is to fetch Scannadio out of his grave about midnight, and bring him to her house, the meaning of which he will see at that time; and if he should refuse, that he offer to come no more near her." The maid obeyed, and going to both, delivered her messages. They replied, that they would not only go into a grave, but even to hell, if it was her desire. She accordingly reported their answers to the lady, who was waiting to see if they would be such fools as to do so. At night, therefore, Alessandro stripped into his waistcoat and went to supply Scannadio's place in the vault, when he was seized with sudden terror by the way, and began to say to himself, "What a fool am I! Whither am I going? How do I know but this is a trap laid by some of her relations, who have made a discovery of my love, to murder me in the vault, which may be effected, and nobody know anything of the matter; or how can I be assured but it is a stratagem of some rival, whom she may love better than me? But suppose again, on the other hand, that none of these things are intended, and that her relations carry me to her house, I must conclude that they cannot want Scannadio's body, either to keep themselves or to present to her, but rather that they mean to mangle it, it having deserved such treatment from them. She also enjoins me not to speak a word, whatever shall be done to me. But suppose they pluck out my eyes, or lop off my hands, how can I bear that? and should I cry out, and they know me, they might then use me ill; or otherwise, they may not leave me with the lady, and so she may pretend that I have disobeyed her orders, and my labour will be all lost." Full of these reflections, he was on the point of returning home, till his love spurred him on with more prevailing arguments to the contrary, and he hurried along to the vault, which

he opened, and having entered, he stripped the dead body, and put on the shroud; and, after he had closed the grave again, he laid himself down in Scannadio's place, when calling to mind the man's character, and the reports which he had heard of his ransacking people's graves, and committing all kinds of villainy, he was so terrified that his hair stood on end, and he was expecting every moment that the man should rise up and strangle him there. Yet still his love got the better of his fear, and he lay as if he was dead, waiting for the event. As soon as it was midnight, Rinuccio went out also to obey his mistress's commands; and as he passed along he began to think of many things which might happen to him; particularly his being met by the sheriff's officers with Scannadio's body on his back, and so punished for sacrilege, or else his falling under the resentment of the man's relations, if they should chance to know it; with more such apprehensions, enough to have deterred him from the enterprise. Till considering with himself, he said, "What, and shall I say no to the lady's first request, whom I have loved, and do still love so much; especially as it is to gain her favour? Undoubtedly, were I sure to die in the attempt, I would fulfil my promise." Full of that resolution, he went to the grave, and opened it. Alessandro though he was very much frightened, lay still nevertheless. Whilst Rinuccio, thinking that it was Scannadio's body, took Alessandro by the feet and drew him out, and hoisting him upon his shoulders, he went on towards Francesco's house. But carrying him along without any great care, he would frequently hit him a great thump against the wall, first on one side, and then on the other: the night also was so dark, that he scarcely knew where he went; and being now got to the door, and she sitting with her maid at the window, expecting their

coming, and prepared to send them about their business, it happened that the officers were waiting there, to take a certain outlaw, when, hearing the noise of Rinuccio's steps they drew out their lanterns to see who it was, whilst they raised up their halberds, and cried out, "Who is there?" Rinuccio, upon this, without any great deliberation, threw his burden down, and ran away as fast as his legs could carry him. Alessandro too got up as speedily as he could, though the dead man's clothes were a good deal too long for him, and made off as well as the other.—Now the lady saw plainly by the officers' light, how Rinuccio had the other upon his back, with the dead man's shroud on, and was astonished at the resolution of both; laughing heartily, however, as soon as she saw Alessandro thrown down, and that each of them took to his heels. And being thankful for her deliverance she returned into her chamber, declaring to her maid, that surely their love must be very great to fulfil such conditions. Rinuccio stayed at a distance, cursing his hard fortune, till the officers were gone, when he came groping about to find where he had thrown Alessandro down, desiring to complete his commands; but not meeting with him, and supposing that the officers had taken him away, he departed, vexed at his disappointment. Alessandro, also, not knowing what to do, and being ignorant who the person was that had carried him thither, went home with the like concern. And in the morning, Scannadio's vault being found open, and the body not seen therein, because Alessandro had rolled it to the bottom, the town was all in an uproar about it, many people believing that the devil had certainly carried him off. Nevertheless, both the lovers signified to the lady what they had done, and how they had been disappointed, excusing themselves thereby for not having fully executed her commands, and

still entreating her favour and love: whilst she, seeming to credit neither, cut them both short with an absolute denial, inasmuch as both had failed in the performance of the conditions required.

NOVEL II

An abbess, going in haste, and in the dark, to surprise one of her nuns, instead of her veil, puts on the priest's breeches. The lady accused makes a just remark upon this, and so escapes.

PHILOMENA was now silent, and the lady's contrivance to free herself from two troublesome people, whom she could not love, was generally approved; their daring presumption being judged the effect not of love, but folly. When the queen pleasantly said, "Eliza, do you follow;" who immediately began:—

The lady you have just mentioned saved herself very dexterously from trouble; but a certain nun escaped the most imminent danger by a word or two aptly spoken, more through her good fortune. There are many simple people who prove the rigid masters and correctors of others, whom fortune takes occasion sometimes very justly to expose and humble, as was the case of the abbess, under whose government the nun was, of whom I am going to speak.

In Lombardy was a monastery, famous for its sanctity; and amongst the other nuns belonging to it was a lady, named Isabella, of exquisite beauty, as well as of a noble family, who had fallen in love with a young gentleman that came with a relation of hers to see her at the grate. He also had conceived the same affection for her, and this love continued some time without effect, to the great concern of both. At last he thought of a way to get to her, and continued visiting her in that manner till he was

discovered by one of the ladies. She communicated the affair to some others; and first, they were resolved to accuse her to the abbess, a worthy good lady in the opinion of the nuns and other people that knew her: but afterwards, for fear she should deny it, it was agreed that the abbess should surprise them together; and so they kept watch by turns, in order to find them out. One night, therefore, Isabella having her lover in her chamber, without the least suspicion of their designs, the scouts immediately perceived it, and dividing themselves into parties, one guarded the entrance into her room, whilst the other ran to the lady abbess's chamber, when knocking at the door, they cried, "Pray, madam, get up as quick as you can, for our sister Isabella has a man in her apartments." Now that night it happened that the abbess had a priest with her, who had been frequently brought to her in a chest; and fearing lest, out of their great hurry and eagerness, they might force the door open she immediately arose and dressed herself as well as she could in the dark; and thinking that she had taken a certain plaited veil, which she usually wore, she chanced to lay hold of the priest's breeches, and threw them over her head in its stead. She now went forth, and locking the door after her, she said, "Where is this wicked woman?" Away then she posted along with the nuns who were so zealous and intent upon finding out poor Isabella, that they never took notice of what she had upon her head: and coming to her chamber, they found her and her lover together, who were so confounded that they could not speak a word. She was then taken and carried to the chapter-house, the young gentleman being left in the chamber waiting to see what the end would be, and resolving to revenge himself, if any harm was offered to his mistress and afterwards to take her away.

The abbess having taken her place in the chapter, with her nuns about her, who had all their eyes only on the guilty person, she began to give her a most severe reprimand for having defiled, as she told her, by her most disorderly and wicked actions, the sanctity, honesty, and good name of the monastery, adding thereto most bitter threats. The lady, quite confounded between fear and shame, was able to make no defence, moving many of them to compassion with her silence; but the abbess still continuing her abuses, she happened to raise up her head, when she saw the breeches hanging on each side of the abbess's neck, and being a little comforted with that, as she conjectured the fact, she said, "Please, madam, to button your coif, and then tell me what you would have."—"What coif is that you mean?" replied she, "you wicked woman, you! Have you the assurance to laugh at me? Do you think jests will serve your turn in such an affair as this?" The lady said once more, "I beg, madam, that you would first button your coif and then speak." Upon which they all perceived Isabella's meaning. And the abbess, finding that she was detected of the very same crime, soon changed her note, and began to excuse and palliate the matter. So she returned to her priest, as Isabella did to her lover. And they continued their interviews together, in spite of all such as envied their happiness, whilst the rest procured themselves lovers as soon as they could.

NOVEL III

Master Simon, the doctor, with Bruno, and the rest, make Calandrino believe that he is with child; who gives them fowls and money, to compose a medicine for him; and he recovers without being delivered.

AFTER Eliza had concluded her novel, and the company

all expressed their joy for the lady's happy escape from the invidious censures of her sister-nuns, the queen ordered Philostratus to proceed, which he immediately did in this manner:—

The odd figures of a judge, that was spoken of yesterday, prevented my giving you a story of Calandrino, which I had ready to tell you; therefore, as whatever is related of him must be entertaining, though we have had a great deal already about him and his companions, I shall now say what I had then in my mind.

You have heard who Calandrino was, as well as the rest of the people concerned in this novel, so I shall tell you, without farther preface, that he had an aunt died who left him about twenty pounds, on which he began to talk of purchasing an estate, and was running to treat with every broker in Florence, as if he had been worth the Indies, but there was an end always when they came to talk of a price. Now Bruno and Buffalmacco, who knew all this, had often told him that he had better spend it with them than lay it out on a little paltry land, but in vain; he would never part with a farthing. One day being in company with another painter, whose name was Nello, and having agreed to feast themselves well at his expense, and being resolved too in what manner, the next morning, as he was going out of his house, he was met by Nello, who said, "Good morning to you, and a good year also." After which the other began to look wistfully in his face, when he said, "What do you look at?" quoth Nello, "Has anything been the matter with you last night? You are quite a different person." Calandrino grew thoughtful at this and said, "Alas now, what do you think I ail?" Nello replied, "Oh! I do not speak it upon that account, it may be something else;" and away he went. Calandrino went on a little diffident, though feeling

nothing all the time, when Buffalmacco came up to him, seeing him part from Nello and asked him whether he was well. Calandrino replied, "Indeed I do not know: is it possible to be otherwise, and I not perceive it?" Said Buffalmacco, "It may be so, or it may not; but I assure you, you look as though you were half dead." He now thought himself in a high fever, when Bruno came up, and the first word he said was, "Monstrous! how you look! why, you are dead. Have you any sense of feeling?" He now concluded it was really so, and he asked them, in a great fright, what he had best do. "I advise," quoth Bruno, "that you go home and get to bed, covering yourself up close, whilst you send your water to Master Simon the doctor: he is our friend, you know, and will put you into a method; in the meantime we will go with you, and do what we can for you." So they took him to his own house, and he went upstairs ready to die away every moment, when he said to his wife, "Come and cover me up well in bed, for I find myself extremely ill." And being laid down, he sent his water by a little girl to the doctor, whose shop was in the old market, at the sign of the Melon. Bruno now said to his friends, "Do you stay here, and I will go and hear what the doctor says, and bring him with me if there be occasion." Said Calandrino, "Pray do, my good friend, and let me know how it stands with me, for I feel myself strangely within." Bruno getting to the doctor's before the girl, let him into the secret. When the child came therefore, and he had examined the water, he said to her, "Go and bid him keep warm, and I will come instantly, and direct what to do." She returned, and told Calandrino, and in a little time the doctor and Bruno came together, when the doctor sat down by him, and began to feel his pulse; at last he said, the wife being present, "I must tell you, as

a friend, that your illness is nothing else but your being with child." As soon as he heard this, he began to roar out, and say to his wife, "Alas, this is all your doing!" Whilst the poor woman was so surprised, and out of countenance, that she left the room. He then continued his complaints, saying, "What must I do? Or how shall I be delivered?" His companions had much ado to keep from laughing, seeing him in all this fright; and as for the doctor, he shewed all his teeth in such a manner that you might have drawn every one out, till, at length, Calandrino requesting the doctor's best advice and assistance, the doctor replied, "Calandrino, I would not have you make yourself too uneasy, for since I know your ailment, I doubt not but I shall soon give you relief, and with a very little trouble; but it will be with some expense."—"O doctor," quoth he, "I have twenty pounds, which should have bought me an estate; take it all, rather than let it come to a labour; for I hear the women make such a noise at those times, that I shall never get through it."—"Never fear," said the doctor, "I shall prepare you a distilled liquor, very pleasant to the taste, which will resolve and bring it away, so that in three days you shall be as well as ever, nor subject any more to the like mishap. Now I must have six fat fowls, and for the other things, which will cost about ten shillings, you must give one of your friends here the money to buy, and bring them to my shop; and to-morrow morning I will send you the distilled water, which you must drink by a large glassful at a time." He replied, "Doctor, I rely upon you." So he gave Bruno ten shillings, and money also for the fowls, and desired he would take that trouble upon him. The doctor then made a little hippocrass, and sent it him. Whilst Bruno, with his companions and the doctor, were very merry over the fowls, and other good

cheer purchased with the rest of the money. After Calandrino had drunk the hippocrass for the three mornings, the doctor came with his companions to see him, and on feeling his pulse, he said, "You are now quite well, and need confine yourself within doors no longer." He was overjoyed at this, and gave the doctor great thanks, telling everybody he met what a cure Doctor Simon had wrought him in three days' time, and without the least pain. Nor were his friends less pleased in over-reaching his extreme avarice; but as to the wife, she saw into the trick, and made a great clamour about it.

NOVEL IV

Fortarrigo played away all that he had at Buonconvento, as also the money of Angio lieri, who was his master; then running away in his shirt, and pretending that the other had robbed him, he caused him to be seized by a country people, when he put on his clothes, and rode away upon his horse, leaving him there in this shirt.

CALANDRINO's simplicity had occasioned a good deal of diversion; when Neiphile, as it was the queen's pleasure, began in this manner:—

If it were not mere difficult for people to shew their worth and good sense, rather than their bad dispositions and folly, they would not need to lay their tongues under the severe restraint that many are forced to do; now I mean to tell a story quite contrary to the last, namely, how the vileness of one man came beyond the understanding of another, to the great detriment and derision of the person so outwitted.

There dwelt, not long since, at Siena, two young men of equal years, the one named Angiolieri, and the other Fortarrigo, who, as they resembled each other in

many things, so, more particularly in their disobedience to their fathers, by which means they became inseparable friends. But Angolieri, who was an accomplished gentleman, finding that he could not subsist very well there upon his father's allowance and hearing that a certain cardinal was come to Ancona, as the pope's legate, who had shewed a particular regard for him, he resolved to go thither, in hopes of bettering his condition. So making his mind known to his father, he got half a year's stipend beforehand, in order to furnish himself with clothes and horses for his more creditable appearance. And being in want of a servant, Fortarrigo, who had notice of it, came and requested the favour that he would take him along with him in that capacity, offering to be his valet, footman, and everything else, without a farthing of wages more than his expenses, which the other refused, not that he thought him unfit for his service, but because he knew him to be a gamester, and one that would frequently get drunk. Fortarrigo assured him that he would be constantly on his guard with respect to both, confirming it with many protestations, and begging so hard besides, that at last he gave his consent.

Accordingly they set out upon their journey, and rode as far as Buonconvento, where they stopped to dine; and after dinner, as it was very hot weather, Angolieri ordered a bed to be prepared, when he made his man undress him, and went to sleep, ordering him to call him up exactly as the clock struck nine. Whilst he was asleep, therefore, Fortarrigo went to the tavern, and, after drinking pretty heartily, began to play with some people there, who soon won what little money he had, as also the clothes off his back. When, being desirous of retrieving what he had lost, he went, stripped as he was, to Angolieri's bed-side, and finding him fast asleep, he

took all the money out of his pocket, and returning to play, lost it, as he had done the rest. As soon as Angiolieri awoke, he arose and dressed himself, inquiring for Fortarrigo, who, not being to be found, he supposed he was gone somewhere or other to sleep, as he was to do; therefore he determined to leave him there, ordering the saddle and portmanteau to be put upon his horse, with a design of providing himself with another servant at Corsignano. And putting his hand into his pocket to pay his landlord, he found he had no money, upon which he made a great uproar, declaring he had been robbed, and threatening to have them all sent prisoners to Siena; when, behold, Fortarriogo came running in his shirt, with a design of stealing his clothes, as he had before his money, and seeing him about to ride away, he said, "What is the meaning of this, sir? Why should we go so soon? Do stay a little. A man has got my coat in pawn for eight-and-thirty shillings, and I daresay he will let us have it for five-and-thirty to be paid down." But as he was saying this, a person came and told Angiolieri that Fortarrigo was a thief, as appeared from the quantity of money he had lost; upon which Angiolieri was in a most violent passion, threatening to have him hanged up and gibbeted; saying this, he mounted his horse. "But," said Fortarrigo, as if he had been no way concerned, "pray, sir, leave off this idle talk and let us have regard to the main point; we may have this coat now for five-and-thirty shillings, which, if we stay till to-morrow, the person who lent me the money may expect eight-and-thirty for. Then why should we lose these three shillings? Angiolieri was out of all patience, hearing this from him, and seeing the surprise of the people all around him, who seemed to him to think not that Fortarrigo had gamed away his money, but rather that

he had some of Fortarrigo's money in keeping; so he said, "Plague take thee and thy coat! Is it not enough to have robbed me, but thou must insult me into the bargain, and stop my going away?" Still Fortarrigo continued, as if he had not been the person spoken to, adding, "Consider these three shillings. Do you think I shall never pay you again? If you have any regard for me, pray do. Why need you be in such a hurry? We shall be time enough at Torrenieri. Then open your purse. I may go to every shop in Siena, and not get such another coat. And to tell me that I must leave it for eight-and-thirty shillings, when it is worth more than forty, is doing me a double injury." Angiolieri, vexed to the last degree at seeing himself robbed, and then kept in talk in that manner, turned his horse, and rode towards Torrenieri. When Fortarrigo, who had still a more knavish design, ran after him for two miles together, begging for his coat; and as the other was going to put on, in order to get rid of his noise, it happened that there were some labourers by the road where Angiolieri was to pass, when he called out to them, "Stop thief;" so they took their forks and spades, and seized him, imagining that he had robbed the other, who was following after in that manner. And it was in vain that he offered to tell them how the case a really was.—In the meantime, Fortarrigo came up, and said, with an angry countenance, "I have a good mind to knock your brains out, you rascal you! to ride away with what belongs to me;" and turning to the people, he added, "You see, gentlemen, in what plight he left me yonder at the inn, having first gamed away all that he had of his own. I may well say that it is you I am obliged to for getting them back, and I shall always acknowledge it." Angiolieri then told them a different story, but they had no regard to what he said. So

Fortarrigo dismounted him, with their assistance, and stripped him of his clothes, which he put on himself, and got upon his horse, leaving him there in his shirt, and barefoot; when he returned to Siena, giving it out everywhere that he had won Angiolieri's horse and clothes at play; whilst Angiolieri thinking to have visited the cardinal in a sumptuous manner, returned poor and naked to Bunoconvento, and he was so ashamed of himself, that he would not go back to Siena, but procuring some money upon the horse that Fortarrigo had ridden on, he clothed himself, and went to his relations at Corsignano, where he stayed till he got a supply from his father. Thus Angiolieri's good design was entirely frustrated by the other's subtle villainy, which yet in due time met with its deserved punishment.

NOVEL V

Calandrino is in love with a certain damsels, when Bruno prepared a charm for her, by virtue of which she follows him, and they are found together by his wife.

NEIPHILE'S short novel was concluded without either too much talk or laughter, when the queen ordered Flammetta to follow, which she did cheerfully in this manner:—

There is nothing can be so often repeated, but what will please the more always, if mentioned in due time and place. When I consider, therefore, the intent of our meeting, which is only to amuse and divert ourselves whilst we are here, I judge nothing either ill-timed or ill-placed which serves to answer that purpose. For which reason, though we have had much about Calandrino already, yet I will venture to give you another story concerning him; in relating which were I disposed to vary from the truth, I should carefully have disguised it in

different names; but, as romancing upon these occasions greatly lessens the pleasure of the hearer, I shall report it in its true shape, replying on the reason before assigned.

Niccolo Cornacchini was a citizen of ours, and a very rich man, who amongst his other estates, was possessed of one at Cameratta, where he built himself a seat, and agreed with Bruno and Buffalmacco to paint it, but there being a great deal of work, they took Nello and Calandrino in to assist them. Where, as there were some chambers furnished, and an old woman there to look after the house, a son of this Niccolo's, named Philippo, being a gay young gentleman, would frequently bring a mistress thither for a day or two and then send her away. Amongst the rest that used to come along with him, was one named Niccolosa, an agreeable and facetious woman enough, who going from her chamber one morning in a loose white bedgown, to wash her hands and face at a fountain in the court, it happened that Calandrino was there at the same time, when he made his compliments to her, which she returned with a kind of a smile at the oddity of the man. Upon this he began to look wistfully at her, and seeing she was very handsome, he found pretences for staying, but durst not speak a word. Still her looks seemed to give him encouragement, whilst the poor man became so enamoured, that he had no power to leave the place, till Philippo chanced to call her into the house. He then returned to his friends in a most piteous aking, which Bruno perceiving, said, "What the devil is the matter with you, that you seem to be in all this trouble?" He replied, "Ah! my friend, if I had any one to assist me, I should do well enough."—"As how?" quoth the other. "I will tell you," he replied. "The most beautiful woman you ever saw, exceeding even theairy queen herself, fell in love with me just now, as I

went to the well."—"Alas ! said Bruno, "you must take care it be not Philippo's mistress."—"I believe it is the same," he replied; "for she went away the moment he called her; but why should I mind that? Was she the king's I would lie with her if I could."—"Well," quoth Bruno, "I will find out who it is, and if she proves the same, I can tell you in two words what you have to do; for we are well acquainted together; but how shall we manage that Buffalmacco may know nothing of the matter? I can never speak to her but he will be present."—"As to Buffalmacco," said he, "I am in no pain for him, but we must take care of Nello, he is my wife's relation, and would spoil our whole scheme." Now Bruno knew her very well, and as Calandrino was gone out one day to get a sight of her, he acquainted Buffalmacco and Nello with it, when they agreed together what to do in the thing. Upon his return, therefore, Bruno whispered him, and said, "Have you seen her?"—"Alas!" quoth he, "I have, and she has slain me outright."—"I will go and see," said he again, "whether it be the person I mean; if it should, you may leave the whole to me." So he went and told Philippo what had passed and how they had resolved to serve him; when he came back and said, "It is the same, therefore we must be very cautious; for if Philippo should chance to find it out, all the water in the river would never wash off the guilt in his sight. But what shall I say to her on your part?" He replied, "First you must let her know that she shall have joy and pleasure without end, and afterwards that I am her most obedient servant, and so forth. Do you take me right?"—"Yes," quoth Bruno, "I do, and you may now trust me to manage for you." When supper time came they left their work, and went down into the court, where they found Philippo and his mistress waiting to make

themselves merry with the poor man, whilst Calandrino began to ogle her in such a manner, that a person that was blind almost must have perceived it; in the meantime Philippo pretended to be talking to the others, as if he saw nothing of the matter. But after some time they parted, and as they were returning to Florence, said Bruno to Calandrino, "I tell you now, that you have made her melt like ice before the sun; do you bring your guitar, and play her a tune, and she will throw herself out of the window to you."—"Do you think so?" quoth Calandrino. "Most certainly," replied the other. "Well," quoth he again, "who but myself could have made such a conquest in so small a time? I am not like your young fellows, that whine for years together to no manner of purpose. Oh! you would be vastly pleased to hear me play and sing: besides, I am not old, as you suppose, which I will soon convince her of." Thus he was so overjoyed that he could scarcely contain himself, and accordingly the next morning he carried his instrument with him, and diverted them all very much; whilst he was running to the window and to the door, at every turn, to see her, so that he did little or no work.

Bruno, on the other part, answered all his messages, & from her; and when she was not there, he would bring letters, which gave him hopes that she would soon ratify his desires but that then she was with her relations, and could not see him.—Thus they diverted themselves at his expense for some time, often getting little presents from him to her, as a purse or knife or some such thing, for which he brought him in return counterfeit rings of no value, with which he was vastly delighted. Having gone on in this manner for two months, when seeing that the work was near finished, and imagining that unless he brought his love to a conclusion before

that time, he should have no opportunity of doing it afterwards, he began to be very urgent with Bruno about it. When the lady being returned, and Bruno having conferred with her and Philippo upon the matter, he said to Calandrino, "You know that she has made us a thousand promises to no purpose, so that it appears to me as if she only did it to lead us by the nose; my advice therefore, is, that we will make her comply, whether she will or not." The other replied, "Let us do it then immediately."—"But," says Bruno, "will your heart serve you to touch her with a certain charm that I shall give you?"—"You need not doubt that," quoth Calandrino. "Then," continued Bruno, "you must procure me a little virgin-parchment, a living bat, three grains of incense, and a consecrated candle." All that night was he employed in taking a bat, which at length he brought with the other things to Bruno, who went into a room by himself and scribbled some odd characters upon the parchment, when he gave it him, saying, "Be careful only to touch her with this, and she will do that moment what you would have her. Therefore, if Philippo should go from home, take an opportunity of coming near, and having touched her, then go into the barn, which is a most convenient place for your purpose, whither she will follow you, when you know what you have to do." Calandrino received it with great joy, saying, "Let me alone for that." Whilst Nello, whom he was most afraid of, was as deep as any in the plot, and went, by Bruno's direction, to Calandrino's wife, at Florence, when he said, "Cousin, you have now a fair opportunity to revenge yourself of your husband, for his beating you the other day without cause; if you let it slip, I will never look up on you more, either as a relation or friend. He has a mistress, whom he is frequently with, and at this very

time they have made an appointment to meet; then pray be a witness to it, and correct him as he deserves." This seemed to her beyond a jest; so she said, "Oh, the villain! but I will pay all his old scores." Accordingly, taking her hood, and a woman to bear her company, she went along with him; and when Bruno saw them at a distance, he said to Philippo, "Behold, our friends are coming, you know what you have to do." On this, Philippo went where Calandrino and the people were at work, and said, "Sirs, I must go to Florence, you will take care not to be idle when I am away." And he went and hid himself in a place where he might see what passed; while Calandrino, thinking that he was far enough off, went into the court, where he found the lady, who, well knowing what he meant to do, came near to him, and shewed herself freer than usual, upon which he touched her with the writing, and then withdrew towards the barn, whilst she followed him in, and shut the door; when laying fast hold about his arms, without suffering him to stir at all, she stood for some time as if she was feasting her eyes with the sight of him. At length she cried out, "O my dear Calandrino! my life! my soul! my only comfort! how long have I desired to have thee in this manner:" and unable to move, said, "My dearest joy! do let me have one kiss."—"My jewel," replied she, "thou art in too much haste; let me satisfy myself first with gazing upon thee." Bruno, Buffalmacco, and Philippo heard and saw all this; and just as he was striving to get a kiss from her comes Nello along with the wife, who immediately said, "I vow they are together." With this she burst open the door, which when Niccolosa saw, she left her spark, and went to Philippo; whilst the wife ran and seized him by the hair, crying out, "You poor pitiful rascal, to dare to serve me in this manner!"

You old villain you! What! have you not enough to do at home? A fine fellow, truly, to pretend to a mistress, with his old worn-out carcass! and she as fine a lady to take up with such a precious thing as you are!" He was confounded to that degree, that he made no defence; so she beat him as she pleased till at length he humbly begged of her not to make that clamour, unless she had a mind to have him murdered, for that the lady was no less a person than the wife of the master of the house. "A plague confound her," she said, "be she who she will."

Bruno and Buffalmacco, who with Philippo and Niccolosa, had been laughing heartily at what passed, came in upon them now, as though they had been drawn thither by the noise, when they pacified her with much ado; persuading him to go home, and to come no more, for fear Philippo should do him a mischief. So he went to Florence, miserably scratched and beaten, without having the heart ever to return; and plagued with the perpetual reproaches of his wife, he put an end to his most fervent love, after having afforded great matter for diversion to his friends, Niccolosa, and to Philippo.

NOVEL VI

Two young gentlemen lie at an inn, one of whom goes to bed to the landlord's daughter; whilst the wife, by mistake, lies with the other. Afterwards, he that had lain with the daughter gets to bed to the father, and tells him all that had passed thinking it had been his friend: a great uproar is made about it; upon which the wife goes to bed to the daughter, and very cunningly sets all to rights again.

CALANDRINO, who had so often diverted the company made them laugh once more; when the queen laid he

next commands upon Pamphilus, who therefore said:—

Ladies, the name of Niccolosa mentioned in the last, puts me in mind of a novel concerning another of the same name; in which will be shewn how the subtle contrivance of a certain good woman was the means of preventing a great deal of scandal.

In the plain of Mugnone lived an honest man, not a long time since, who kept a little hut for the entertainment of travellers, serving them with meat and drink for their money; but seldom lodging any, unless they were his particular acquaintance. Now he had a wife, a good comely woman, by whom he had two children, the one an infant, and the other a girl of about fifteen or sixteen years of age, but unmarried, who had taken the fancy of a young gentleman of our city, one who used to travel much that way: whilst she, proud of such a lover, by endeavouring, with her agreeable carriage, to preserve his good opinion soon felt the same liking for him: which love of theirs would several times have taken effect, to the desire of both, had not Pinuccio, for that was the young gentleman's name, carefully avoided it, for her credit as well as his own. Till at last, his love growing every day more fervent, he resolved, in order to gain his point, to lie all night at her father's house, that it might then be effected without anyone's privity. Accordingly he let a friend of his, named Adriano, into the secret, who had been acquainted with his love; so they hired a couple of horses one evening, and having their portmanteaus behind them, filled with things of no moment, they set out from Florence; and, after taking a circuit came, as it grew late, to the plain of Mugnone; when turning their horses, as if they had come from Romagna, they rode on to this cottage, and knocking at the door, the landlord who was always very diligent in waiting upon

his guests, immediately went and opened it. When Pinuccio accosted him, and said, "Honest landlord, we must beg the favour of a night's lodging for we designed to have reached Florence, but have so managed, that it is now much too late, as you see." The host replied, "Sir, you know very well how ill I can accommodate such gentlemen as yourselves; but as you are come in at an unseasonable hour, and there is no time for your travelling any farther, I will entertain you as well as I can." So they dismounted and went into the house, having first taken care of their horses; and as they had provision along with them, they sat down and supped with him. Now there was only one little chamber in the house, which had three beds in it, namely, two at one end, and the third at the other, opposite to them, with just room to go between; the least bad and incommodious of which the landlord ordered to be sheeted for these two gentlemen, and put them to bed. A little time afterwards, neither of them being asleep, though they pretended it, he made the daughter lie in one of the beds that remained, and he and his wife went into the other, whilst she set the cradle with the child by her bed-side. Things being so disposed, and Pinuccio having made an exact observation of every particular, as soon as he thought it a proper time, and that everyone was asleep, he arose, and went softly to the bed of the daughter, where he continued to his great satisfaction. In the meantime, a cat happened to throw something down in the house, which awakened the good woman, who, fearing it was something else, got up in the dark, and went where she had heard the noise. Whilst Adriano rose by chance, upon a particular occasion, and finding the cradle in his way, he removed it without any design, nearer to his own bed; and having done what he rose for, went to bed again, without taking care to

put the cradle in its place. The good woman, finding what was thrown down to be of no moment, never troubled herself to strike a light, to see farther about it, but returned to the bed where her husband lay; and not finding the cradle, "Bless me," she said to herself, "I had like to have made a strange mistake, and gone to bed to my guests!" Going farther then, and finding the cradle which stood by Adriano, she stepped into bed to him, thinking it had been her husband. He was awake, and treated her very kindly, without saying a word all the time to undeceive her. At length Pinuccio, fearing lest he should fall asleep, and so be surprised with his mistress, after having made the best use of his time, left her to return to his own bed: when meeting with the cradle, and supposing that was the host's bed, he went farther, and stepped into the host's bed indeed, who immediately awoke; and Pinuccio thinking it was his friend, said to him, "Surely, nothing was ever so sweet as Miccolosia; never man was so blessed as I have been with her all night long." The host hearing of this, and not liking it over well, said first to himself, "What the devil is the man doing here?" Afterwards, being more passionate than wise, he cried out, "Thou art the greatest of villains to use one in that manner; but I vow to God I will pay thee for it." Pinuccio, who was none of the sharpest men in the world, seeing his mistake, without ever thinking how to amend it, as he might have done, replied, "You pay me? What can you do?" The hostess, imagining that she had been with her husband, said to Adriano, "Alas! dost thou hear our guests? What is the matter with them?" He replied, with a laugh, "Let them be hanged, if they will; they got drunk, I suppose, last night." The woman now distinguished her husband's voice, and hearing Adriano, soon knew where she was,

and with whom. Therefore she very wisely got up, without saying a word, and removed the cradle, though there was no light in the chamber, as near as she could guess, to her daughter's bed, and crept into her; when, seeming as if she had been awoke with their noise, she called out to her husband to know what was the matter with him and the gentleman. The husband replied, "Do not you hear what he says he has been doing to-night with our daughter?"—"He is a liar," quoth she, "he was never in bed with her, it was I, and I assure you I have never closed my eyes since. Therefore you were to blame to give any credit to him. You drink to that degree in the evening that you rave all night long, and walk up and down, without knowing anything of the matter, and think you do wonders; I am surprised you do not break you neck. But what is that gentleman doing there? Why is he not in his own bed?" Adriano, on the other side, perceiving that the good woman had found a very artful evasion both for herself and daughter, said, "Pinuccio, I have told you a hundred times that you should never lie out of your own house; for that great failing of yours, of walking in your sleep, and telling your dreams for truth, will be of ill consequence to you some time or other. Come here then to your own bed." The landlord, hearing what his wife said, and what Adriano had just been speaking, began to think Pinuccio was really dreaming; so he got up and shook him by the shoulders to rouse him, saying, "Awake, and get thee to thy own bed." Pinuccio, understanding what had passed, began now to ramble in his talk, like a man that was dreaming, with which our host made himself vastly merry. At last he seemed to awake, after much ado; and calling to Adriano, he said, "Is it day? What do you wake me for?"—"Yes, it is," quoth he; "pray come

hither." He pretending to be very sleepy, got up at last, and went to Adriano. And in the morning the landlord laughed very heartily, and was full of jokes about him and his dreams. So they passed from one merry subject to another, whilst their horses were getting ready, and their portmanteaus tying upon them; when, taking the host's parting cup, they mounted and went to Florence, no less pleased with the manner of the things being effected, than what followed. Afterwards Pinuccio contrived other means of being with Niccolosa, who still affirmed to her mother that he was asleep. Whilst she, well remembering how she had fared with Adriano, thought herself the only person that had been awake.

NOVEL VII

Talano di Molese dreamed that a wolf tore his wife's face and throat: and he bids her take care of herself: but she not regarding him, it happens as he dreamed.

PAMPHILUS's novel being concluded, and the good woman's ready thought much commended, the queen turned next to Pampinea, who spoke as follows:—

We have had a great deal heretofore upon the subject of dreams, which many people think nothing of; but notwithstanding what has been said, I shall relate what happened, not long since, to a neighbour of mine, for not believing her husband's dream.

I do not know whether you are acquainted with Talano di Molese, a man of great worth: he had a wife, a very handsome woman, but the most fantastical, cross-grained piece of stuff that could be; insomuch, that she would never do anything that was agreeable to other people, neither could anything ever be done to please her; which, though a great affliction to him, Talano was forced to bear

with. Now it happened one night as they were together at a country house of his, that he dreamed he saw her going through a pleasant grove not far from his house, when a monstrous fierce wolf seemed to leap from a corner of it, which seized her by the throat, and threw her down, and would have dragged her away, whilst she cried out aloud for help; and upon the wolf's leaving her, it appeared that her face and throat were most miserably torn. In consequence of this dream, he said to her in the morning, "Wife, though your nasty froward temper would never suffer me to have one happy day with you, yet I should be sorry if any harm was to befall you; therefore, if you would be ruled by me, you should not stir out of your house to-day." Being asked the reason, he related his whole dream. Upon which she shook her head, and said, "He that means a person ill, dreams the same. You express a good deal of concern for me, indeed, but you dream only as you could wish it: assure yourself, however, that both now and at all times, I shall be very careful not to give you any such pleasure." Talano replied, "I really thought what you would say; such thanks a person has for currying a scald head! But think as you will, I spoke it with a good design, and I advise you again to stay at home, or at least not to go into such a grove."--"Well," she replied, "I will oblige you in that." Afterwards, she began to say to herself, "This rogue has been making an assignation with some base woman or other in yonder place, and thinks to fright me from going thither; I should be blind, indeed, not to see through this artifice; but I will see what sort of cattle they are he is to meet, though I stay the whole day." Having said this, the husband was no sooner out of one door but she went at the other, posting away to the grove; and being come into the thickest part of it,

she stood waiting to see whether anybody came. Continuing upon the watch in this manner without any fears of the wolf, behold, a monstrous large one rushed out of a close thicket, and seized her by the throat, before she had time, from the first seeing of it, to say so much as Lord, help me! and was carrying her away as he would a lamb. She could make no noise, because he pinched her throat, nor was she able to help herself in any other manner, so that she must inevitably have been strangled had he not come in the way of some shepherds, who made a noise, and forced him to quit her. When, being known by them, she was carried to her own house, all torn as she was, attended by several surgeons, who made a cure at last; yet not in such a manner, but that one side of her face was strangely seamed and disfigured, so that there was an end of her beauty. Afterwards, being ashamed to appear abroad, did she lament all her life long her perverse disposition, in not giving credit, in a point which would have cost her nothing, to the true dream of her husband.

NOVEL VIII

Biondello imposes upon one Ciacco with regard to a dinner: who revenges himself afterwards, and causes the other to be soundly beaten.

It was generally agreed, that what Talano had seen in his sleep was no dream, but rather a vision, every part of it having so exactly come to pass. But, being all silent, the queen commanded Lauretta to follow, who therefore said:—

As everybody that has spoken hitherto has given something which has been treated of before, the severe revenge taken by the scholar, as related by Pampinea,

reminds me of another revenge, grievous enough to the person concerned, although less cruel than that was.

In Florence there was a man, the greatest epicure perhaps that ever was born, for which reason he was nicknamed Ciacco, *i.e.*, glutton; who, unable to support the expense which such a craving disposition required, and being in other respects a very agreeable and merry companion, he used frequently to go amongst the rich people, such particularly as loved to live well, and to dine and sup with them, though perhaps he was not always invited. There was also a little dapper spark called Biondello, a perfect butterfly; so exact and finical always as to his person, that there never was a hair amiss; and he followed the same way of life. Being therefore in the fish-market one morning in Lent, and buying a couple of very large lampreys for Signor Vieri de Cierchi, he was taken notice of by the other, who immediately asked who they were for? He replied, "Yesterday Signor Corso Donati had three larger than these sent him, along with a sturgeon; which, not thinking sufficient for all his company, he has ordered me to buy two more: will not you go?" Ciacco replied, "You know very well that I shall." So soon as he thought it was the time, he went to Signor Corso's house, when he found him with some of his neighbours, dinner not being quite ready, who asked him whither he was going? He replied, "Sir, I came to dine with you and your friends." Signor Corso replied, "You are welcome; it is about the time then, let us go in." So they sat down to some peas, and a few small fish fried, without anything more. Ciacco now saw the trick, and resolved to return it. A few days afterwards he met with Biondello, who had made many people merry with the thing, who had accosted him, asking how he liked Signor Corso's lampreys? Ciacco replied,

"Before eight days are at an end, you will know much better than I." So the moment he parted from him, he met with a porter, whom he carried near to the hall of Cavicciuli, where he shewed him a certain knight named *Philippo Argenti*, the most boisterous ill-conditioned man that could be; and he said, "Go, take this bottle in your hand, and say thus to yonder gentleman, 'Sir, *Biondello* gives his service, and desires you would erubinate this flask with some of your best red wine, to treat his friends with;' but take care he does not lay his hands upon you, for you would have a bad time of it if he should, and my scheme be quite defeated." Quoth the porter, "Must I say anything else?"—"No," said *Ciacco*, "only say as I bid you, and when you come here again I will pay you." Accordingly the man delivered his message, whilst *Philippo*, who was easily provoked, imagining that this was done on purpose to enrage him, arose in a great passion, saying, "Stay a little, honest friend, and I will give thee what thou comest for; and was going to have laid hold of him, but the man was aware of it, and took to his heels, returning to *Ciacco*, who saw the whole proceeding, and who paid him with a great deal of pleasure. His next business was to find out *Biondello*; when he said, "Have you been lately at the Cavicciuli?"—"No," he replied, "but why do you ask the question?"—"Because," quoth he, "*Philippo* has been everywhere to seek for you; I do not know what it is for."—"Then," said he, "I will go and speak to him." So he went, whilst the other followed at some distance, to see how he would be received. Now *Philippo* had not yet digested the porter's message, and thinking over and over about it, he concluded it could have no other meaning than that *Biondello* had a mind to affront him. In the meantime *Biondello* comes up to him, when he arose,

and struck him with his double fist; whilst Biondello cried out, "Alas ! what is this for?" He took him by the hair, and threw him upon the ground, saying, 'Villain, I will teach thee to make thy jests of me.' At last, after he had beaten him a good deal, the people interposed, and rescued him, telling him how it came to pass, and blaming him for the message, adding: "You should know Philippo better than to exercise any of your wit upon him." He protested that he never sent any such message, and departed full of grief to his own house, concluding that this was a trick of Ciacco. Some time afterwards Ciacco happened to meet with him, when he said, with a laugh, "Well ! what think you of Philippo's wine?" He replied, "Just as you thought of Corso's lampreys."—"Whenever you are disposed then," quoth Ciacco, "to give me such a dinner, I can give you as good wine as this you have tasted." Biondello now finding that the other was more than his match, begged to be friends, and from that time took care to give him no more provocation.

NOVEL IX

Two young men go to King Solomon for his advice ; the one to know how he is to behave to be beloved, the other how to manage an untoward wife. To the first he replies, Love ; to the second, Go to Goosebridge.

ONLY the queen now remained to speak, saving his privilege to Dioneus; who after they have laughed at the unfortunate Biondello, began in this manner:—

“Whoever rightly considers the order of things may plainly see the whole race of woman-kind is by nature, custom, and the laws, made subject to man, to be governed according to his discretion: therefore it is the duty of

every one of us that desires to have ease, comfort, and repose, with those men to whom we belong, to be humble, patient, and obedient, as well as chaste; which is the great and principal treasure of every prudent woman. And though the laws which regard the good of the community may not teach this in every particular, any more than the custom, the force of which is very great, and worthy to be esteemed, yet it is plainly shewed by nature, who has formed us with delicate and sickly constitutions, our minds timorous and fearful, gentle and compassionate as our tempers, of little bodily strength, our voices soft and pleasing, and the whole motion of our limbs sweetly pliant, as so many apparent proofs that we stand in need of another's guidance and protection. And whom should we have for our rulers and helpers but men? To them, therefore, let us submit ourselves with all due reverence and honour; and she that shall depart from this, I hold worthy not only of reproof, but severe chastisement. I am led to these reflections by what Pampinea has just now told us of the perverse wife of Talano, on whom Providence inflicted a heavier judgment than the husband ever could have thought of. Therefore, as I said before, such women as are not mild, gracious, and compassionate, as nature, custom, and the laws require, are deserving of the greatest punishment; for which reason I shall give you some of Solomon's advice, as a salutary medicine, which I would not have understood by such as stand in no need of it, as if any way designed for them. Although men have the following proverb, "A good horse and a bad one both require spurs—a good wife and a bad one both want a cudgel." Which words we will admit to be true, if spoken only by way of mirth and pastime; and even in a moral sense, we will allow that women are naturally prone and unstable, and therefore a stick may be requisite

to correct the evil dispositions of some, as well as to support the virtue of others, who behave with more discretion, and to be a terror to prevent them from offending. But to let preaching alone, and to proceed with my story.

The fame of Solomon's most wonderful wisdom being carried throughout the whole world, and his being very communicative to such as resorted to him for proofs of it, people were flocking to him from all parts to beg his advice in their most urgent and momentous affairs. Amongst the rest was a young noble man of great wealth, called Melisso, who came from the city of Laiazzo, where he was born and dwelt; and as he was riding on towards Jerusalem he happened, going out of Antioch, to meet with another young gentleman, named Giosseffo, passing the same road, when they travelled for some time together, falling into discourse, as is usual for people that travel, and knowing who Giosseffo was, and from whence he came, he inquired whither he was going, and upon what account. When Giosseffo replied that he was going to King Solomon for advice what method to take with a most perverse ill-conditioned woman that he had married, and whom no entreaties nor fair speeches had the least effect upon to cure her of that temper. He then asked whither he was bound and upon what occasion. Melisso made answer, "I am of Laiazzo, and have an affair that troubles me in like manner; I am rich, and keep a most noble table, entertaining all my fellow citizens, and yet it is a most unaccountable thing, there is nobody that cares for or respects me: so I am going to the same place to know what I must do to be beloved." Thus they rode on together till they came to Jerusalem; when they were introduced to King Solomon by one of his barons. Melisso briefly set forth his misfortune, and Solomon

replied, "Learn to love." Immediately he was shewed out of doors, and Gioseffo related his grievance; when Solomon made no reply but this, "Go to Goosebridge." Accordingly he was also dismissed; and coming to Melisso, who was waiting for him without, he told him what the answer was he had received; he thinking much upon the words, and being able to find out no sense or meaning in them, or to draw any use from them, they considered it as all a mockery, and were making the best of their way home again. After travelling some days, they came to a bridge, where being a great caravan of mules and horses laden, they were obliged to stay till they had passed. The greatest part was now on the other side; but there was a mule that took fright, which would by no means go over: upon which one of the drivers took a stick, and began to beat her gently, in order to make her pass; but she leaped this way and that way, and sometimes would turn back; therefore when he found her so stubborn, he began to lay on as hard as ever he could strike, but all to no purpose. This our two gentlemen saw, and would often say to the man, "You sorry rascal! have you a mind to kill the mule? You should lead her gently over; she will go better in that manner than by so much beating." The man replied, "Gentlemen, you know your horses, and I know my mule; suffer me, then, to manage her as I will." And he beat her again, laying on her so thick that at last he got the better of her, and made her pass. So as they were going away, Gioseffo asked a man that was sitting at the end of the bridge, what the name of it was? "Sir," quoth the man, "This place is called Goosebridge." This made him call to mind the words of Solomon; and he said to Melisso, "Now, trust me, friend, Solomon's counsel may be very good and true; for I never yet beat my wife, but this man

hath just now shewed me what I have to do." And, coming to Antioch, he kept Melisso at his house for some days, when, being received by her with great joy, he ordered her to dress the supper according to Melisso's direction, who, seeing that it was his friend's will, gave his instructions for that purpose. But she, according to custom, did everything quite the reverse of what Melisso had told her; which Gioseffo saw with a good deal of vexation, and said, "Were not you told in what manner to dress this supper?" She replied, with great disdain, "What is that to you? If you have a mind to eat, do; if not, you may let it alone." Melisso was surprised at her reply, and began to blame her for it. But Gioseffo said, "I find, madam, you are still the same person; but I will make you change your manners." Then, turning to Melisso, he added, "Well, we shall now make trial of Solomon's advice; however, I must beg of you to consider it all as a joke, and not to offer me any hindrance; but remember what the man said when we were pitying the mule." Quoth Melisso, "I am in your house, and shall conform to your pleasure." So he took a good oaken stick, and followed her into the chamber, whither she was gone in a pet, and began to give her some severe discipline. When she cried out; and threatened him very much; but finding that he still persisted, she threw herself upon her knees, and begged for mercy, promising that for the future she would always be obedient to his will and pleasure. He continued, nevertheless, laying on till he was weary, that in short she had not a free part about her. And when he had done, he came to Melisso, and said, "To-morrow we shall see the effect of the advice to go to Goosebridge." Then he washed his hands, and they sat down to supper, and afterwards, when it was the time, they went to repose themselves.

The poor lady had much trouble to get up from the ground, when she threw herself upon the bed, and betimes in the morning she arose and sent to her husband, to know what he would have for dinner. He smiled at this, with his friend, and told her.

When the time came, therefore, they found everything prepared according to the directions given; upon which they highly commended the advice which they so ill understood. Some time afterwards Melisso parted from Gioseffo, and went home; when he acquainted a certain wise man in the neighbourhood with what Solomon had told him; who said, "No better or truer advice could possibly be given you; you know that you have a regard for no one person, and that the entertainments you make are for no love you bear those people, but only mere pomp and show. Love, then, as Solomon advises, and you shall be beloved." Thus the unruly woman was managed, and the man by loving others was himself beloved.

NOVEL X

Don John, at the request of his companion Peter, proceeds by enchantment to turn his life into a mare; but when he is about to attach the tail, Peter, in crying out that he will not have the tail, breaks the enchantment.

THE foregoing novel related by the queen, though it made the men laugh, caused some disapprobation among the ladies; but they were presently appeased: and it being the turn of Dioneus, he said:—

By your leave, fair ladies, I will tell you a tale which shall not be so long, by which you will understand how carefully we must observe whatever is commanded by those who are about to do anything by force of incanta-

tion, and how a trifling mistake will frustrate everything the enchantment would have effected.

There was last year at Barletta, a priest named Don John of Barolo, whose benefice being so poor as not to afford a sufficient livelihood, he began, with a single mare, to carry on a traffic at the fairs of Puglia. In travelling the country he became particularly intimate with a man who followed the same trade, and carried his merchandise on an ass, and who was called Pietro di Tresanti Don John, in token of kindness and friendship, and according to the custom of Puglia, never called his acquaintance otherwise than his "Comrade Peter"; and whenever he came to Barletta he invited him to sleep at his poor dwelling, and gave him the best cheer in his power. Peter, however, was still poorer, having only a little cabin in the village of Tresanti, which was merely big enough for himself, his young and handsome wife, and his ass; nevertheless, when Don John came to Tresanti he brought him to his cabin, and received and honoured him in the best manner he could out of gratitude for the treatment he had met with at Barletta. But when bed-time arrived Peter could not accommodate Don John in the manner he could wish, for he had but one little bed for himself and wife; therefore Don John was obliged to sleep on some straw near to his mare, who was lodged in a little stable with the ass. Peter's wife, knowing the hospitable reception which the priest gave her husband when he went to Barletta, was desirous of going to sleep with her female neighbour, in order that he might have her half of the bed. The priest would not suffer this, but said to her, "My good Dame Gemmata, be not troubled on my account, for I am very well off; I can when I please turn this mare into a beautiful girl, and be happy with her; and when I wish to go, I can again transform her

into a mare: therefore I never separate myself from her." The young wife was greatly astonished at this, but believing it implicitly, related it to her husband, saying, "If he is so much your friend as you tell me, why do you not make him teach you this enchantment, in order that you might make a mare of me, and carry on your business with the ass and the mare, by which means we should gain double: when we came home, you could make me return into a woman, as I am." Peter, who was more dull than otherwise, thought well of it, agreed to her proposition, and began, with the best grace he could put on, to solicit Don John to teach him the secret. Don John endeavoured to persuade him from such nonsense, but Peter would not be refused. He therefore said, "Since you will have it so, we must rise to-morrow, as usual, before day-break, and I will show you how it is done; but the most difficult part of this affair is the putting off the tail, as you will see."

Peter and his wife having scarcely slept during the night, and being so anxious about this affair, rose the moment the time had arrived, and called Don John, who got up and came in his shirt to their chamber. He said, "I know no one in the world for whom I would do this but you; but as it pleases you, I'll do it: you must, however, do what I tell you, if you wish the incantation to succeed." They promised to do everything he bade them; Don John then took a candle, and putting it in the hand of Peter, said, "Notice well what I do, and remember what I say; but have a care, as you love yourself, that whatever you see you utter not a single word, or you will spoil the whole, and pray to God that the tail may be well put on." After this, Don John made Emma strip herself stark naked, and go down upon all-fours, after the manner of a mare. He then began

with his hands to rub her face and head, saying, "this will be a fine mare's head;" and touching her hair, "this will be a fine mare's mane;" examining her arms, "these will be fine legs and fine feet for a mare;" next, he felt her stomach, and finding it firm and round, he made her rise up and stand erect, saying, "this will make a good mare's chest;" and when he had in this manner gone over her back, her buttocks, her thighs, and her legs, and there remained nothing else to make but the tail,* *levata la camiscia, e presso il piuolo col quale egli piantava gli uomini, e prestamente nel solco per cio fatto messolo*, saying, "and this will be a fine mare's tail." Peter, who to this moment had silently regarded everything that was done, seeing this conclusion, and thinking everything was not right, cried, "Stop, Don John, I will not have a tail—I will not have a tail." *Era gia l'umido radicale, per lo quale tutte le piante s' appiccano, venuto, quando Donno Gianni tiratolo indietro*, saying, "Alas, my dear friend Peter, what have you done! did I not tell you not to utter a word about what you saw? the mare was almost made; but you have spoilt the whole affair by speaking, and 'tis now impossible to repair the

**Pierre regardoit attentivement tout son manege, et s'inquietoit du peu de progrès de l'opération magique. En effet le plus difficile restoit à arranger; une jument ne peut se passer de queue; une femme n'a rien que puisse aider à cette metamorphose; l'obligeant ami se voyoit oblige d'y suppléer, et ce dénouement etoit vraiment le moment le plus interessant de la pièce; mais à l'instant où Barolle attachoit cette queue tant attendue, et sentoit ce délire, cette fureur, ces transports qui announce que le charme va se consommer, ne voilà-t-il pas le benêt de mari qui s'écrie: "Alte là, messire Barolle, je n'y veux point de quene; et qui diable attacha jamais une queue si bas? messire Barolle, je n'y veux point de queue." Tant que Pierre se contenta de parler, l'opération continua; mais lorsque impatient é de l'obstination du magicien, il alla ce tirer pds sa soutane.*

mischief you have done." Peter replied, "It is as well as it is, for I will not have such a tail; why did you not tell me to do it myself? you have also attempted to put it on too low."—"Because," said Don John, "you would not, for the first time, have known how to put it on so well as I do." The young wife hearing these words, raised herself on her feet, and said, in good earnest, to her husband, "Brute that you are; why have you ruined both your own fortune and mine? What mare have you ever seen without a tail? You are poor; but if God aids me you shall be well employed if you are not still poorer." There being no other means of turning the young wife into a mare, in consequence of the words spoken by Peter, she, in a grievous and melancholy mood, put on her clothes, and her husband endeavoured to carry on his usual business, as she had previously done, with his single ass, and did not go with Don John to the fairs of Bitonto; nor did he, ever since that period, seek to enrich himself by the aid of such services.

This tale was received with considerable laughter, and it appeared that the ladies understood it better than Dioneus had intended.

The novels were now concluded, and the sun began to grow warm, when the queen, knowing that her reign was at an end, arose, and taking the crown from her own head, she placed it upon Pamphilus, who was the only person on whom that honour had not yet been conferred, saying, with a smile, "Sir, a very great charge now rests upon you; for, as you are the last, you have to supply my defect, and that of the rest who have been in my place, which I hope you will do." Pamphilus, pleased with the honour done him, replied, "Your virtue, madam, and that of my other subjects, will cause me to receive praise, as well as the rest that have gone before me."

So, after giving the usual orders to the master of the household, he turned to the ladies, and said, "It was Emilia's great prudence yesterday to let us choose our own subjects by way of ease and respect: therefore, being now a little recruited, I will that we return to our old law, and for to-morrow the subject shall be as follows: of such persons who have done some gallant or generous action, either as to love or anything else. The relating such stories as those will kindle in our minds a generous desire of doing the like; so that our lives, the continuance of which in these frail bodies can be cut short, may be made immortal in an illustrious name; which all persons, not devoted to their lustful appetites, like brute beasts, ought, with their whole study and diligence, to covet and seek."

The theme was agreeable to the whole assembly. And with the leave of the new king they parted, and went as they were severally disposed, to divert themselves till supper, when everything was served up with great elegance and order. Afterwards they danced as usual singing also a thousand songs, more agreeable indeed as to the words than music; when the king, at last, ordered Neophile to give one relating more to herself, which she did very agreeably in the following manner:

SONG

I

Regardful through the meads I stray,
Where flowers their various hues display;
When all that's sweet and pleasing there,
I to my lover's charms compare.

II

I pick out such as fairest seem,
And laugh and talk as 'twere to him,
Which, when my am'rous tale is said,
I to my lover's charms compare.

THE DECAMERON

III

Whilst thus employed an equal joy
I find, as though himself were by.
How great! no language can reveal,
'Tis that my sighs alone can tell:

IV

Which, harshness and distrust apart,
Breathe warm the dictates of my heart ;
Such as he ever shall approve,
And meet with equal zeal and love.

The song was much commended by the king, as well
is the whole company: and, a good part of the night
being spent, they were ordered to go and repose them-
selves till the next day.

THE TENTH DAY

Now began certain little clouds, that were in the west, to blush with a vermillion tint, whilst those in the east grew bright at their extremities, like burnished gold, owing to the sunbeams approaching near, and glancing upon them, when Pamphilus arose, and assembled all his company.

After concluding whither they were to go, he led the way with an easy pace, attended by Philomena and Flammetta, the rest all following at a distance talking of many things relating to their future conduct; and taking a considerable circuit, they returned, as the sun grew warm, to the palace. There, plunging their glasses in the clear current, they quaffed their morning draughts from whence they went amidst the shady walks of the garden to amuse themselves till dinner. After dining and sleeping as usual, they met where the king appointed when he laid his first commands on Neiphile, who began very pleasantly in this manner:

NOVEL I

A certain knight in the service of the King of Spain thinks himself no sufficiently rewarded, when the king gives a remarkable proof that it was not his fault so much as the knight's ill fortune; and afterwards nobly requites him.

BEHOLD it, ladies, as a singular favour, that the king has appointed me to speak first on so noble a subject as that of magnificence, which, as the sun is the glory of heaven

is the ornament and lustre of every other virtue. I shall relate, therefore, a pleasant novel enough, in my opinion, and which can be no other than useful.

Know, then, that amongst other worthy knights of our city was one Ruggieri de' Figiovanni, whose worth and valour made him equal at least to the best; and who, finding, according to the dispositions of his countrymen, that he had no opportunity of shewing his courage at home, resolved to go into the service of Alphonso, King of Spain, the most celebrated prince of his time. So he went attended with an honourable train, and was most graciously received by the king, to whom he soon made his merit known as well by his gallant way of life, as glorious feats of arms. Continuing then some time there, and having particular regard to every action of the king's, he found that he gave away castles, cities, and baronies, sometimes to one, and sometimes to another, without the least judgment, and where there was no show of merit in the case, and that he came in for no part himself. Therefore being sensible of his own worth, and fearful lest his character should suffer by such an oversight, he took a resolution to depart, desiring the king's leave, which was granted him. His majesty also made him a present of a fine mule, which was very acceptable, on account of the long journey he had to perform. After which the king gave it in charge to one of his servants to contrive to fall in with him upon the road, but in such a manner that the knight should have no suspicion of his sending him, when he was to note what he should say concerning the king, in order to carry a full account back, and the next morning he was to command his return with him to the king. Accordingly the servant waited for the knight's departure, and soon joined him, giving him to understand that he was going towards Italy. Thus they

rode on, chattering together. The knight being upon the mule which the king had given him, and it being now about three o'clock, he said. "We should do well to give our beasts a little rest." This being agreed, they put them in a stable, when they all staled except the mule. Going on afterwards, the servant attentive all the time to the knight's words, they came to a river, where, watering all their beasts, the mule chanced to stale in the river, which when the knight saw, he said, "Plague on thee for an ill-conditioned beast, thou art just like thy master that gave thee to me." The servant took particular notice of this, and though he had picked up many things upon the road, there was no other but what redounded to the king's credit; so the next morning, as they had mounted their horses, and were setting out for Italy, he delivered the king's mandate, upon which the knight immediately turned back. And the king being informed of what he had said concerning the mule, had him brought before him, when he received him with a cheerful countenance, demanding why the mule and he were compared to each other. He very frankly replied, "It is, my lord, because you give where you ought not, and where you ought, there you give nothing; just as the mule would not stale where she should, but did it where she should not."—"Believe me, Signor Ruggieri," replied the king, "if I have not given to you as I have done to divers others, who are no way your equals, this happened not because I have not known you to be a valiant knight, and deserving of all I could do for you; but it was entirely your ill fortune, as I will soon convince you."—"My lord," answered the knight, "I do not complain because I have yet received nothing from your majesty, out of any desire of becoming richer but only as you have borne testimony in no respect to my virtue; and

though I hold your excuse to be good, I should yet be glad to see what you promise to show me, notwithstanding I want no such proof." The king then led him into a great hall, where as he had before given order, stood two large coffers, when he said, in the presence of many of his lords, "Sir Knight, in one of these coffers is my imperial crown, sceptre, globe, with all the best jewels that I have; the other is filled only with earth; then choose which you will, and it shall be yours; so you will see whether it is I that am ungrateful to your merit, or whether it be your ill fortune." Ruggieri, seeing it was the king's pleasure, made his choice of one, which the king ordered to be opened, and it was full of earth, upon which the king laughed, and said, "You see now, sir, that what I said of your fortune is true; but most assuredly your valour deserves that I interpose in the case. I know very well that you have no desire to become a Spaniard, for which reason I would give you neither castle nor city; but this chest, which your ill fortune deprived you of, I will shall be yours, in despite of her. Take it home with you, that you may value yourself upon your virtue amongst your neighbours and friends, by this testimony of my bounty." The knight received it, and, after returning his majesty the thanks that were due for such a present, departed joyfully therewith to his native country.

NOVEL II

Ghino di Tacco takes the Abbot of Cligni prisoner, and cures him of a pain in his stomach, and then sets him at liberty; when he returns to the court of Rome, and reconciling him with Pope Boniface, he is made prior of an hospital.

ALPHONSO's magnificence was much applauded, when the king, who seemed more particularly pleased with it,

laid his next commands upon Eliza, and she immediately said:—

For a king to be magnificent, and to give proofs of it to a person that had served him, must be allowed a great and commendable action. But what will you say to the wonderful generosity of a clergyman towards one too that was his enemy; can anything be objected to that? Nothing surely can be said less than this, that if the one was a virtue in a king, the other in a churchman was a perfect prodigy; inasmuch as they are for the most part more sordid than even women, and avowed enemies to everything of generosity. And though it is natural to desire revenge, they, notwithstanding their preaching up patience and recommending the forgiveness of injuries to others pursue it with more rancour than other people. This thing, therefore (I mean the generosity of a certain prelate) will be made appear in the following story.

Ghino di Tacco was a man famous for his bold and insolent robberies, who being banished from Siena, and at utter enmity with the counts di Santa Fiore, caused the town of Radicofani to rebel against the church, and lived there whilst his gang robbed all who passed that way. Now when Boniface the Eighth was pope, there came to court the Abbot of Cligni, reputed to be one of the richest prelates in the world, and having debauched his stomach with high living, he was advised by his physicians to go to the bath of Siena, as a certain cure. And, having leave from the pope, he set out with a goodly train of coaches, carriages, horses, and servants, paying no respect to the rumours concerning this robber. Ghino was apprised of his coming, and took his measures accordingly; when, without the loss of a man, he enclosed the abbot and his whole retinue in a narrow defile, where it was impossible for them to escape. This being done, he

sent one of his principal fellows to the abbot, with his service, requesting the favour of him to alight and visit him at his castle. Upon which the abbot replied, with a great deal of passion, that he had nothing to do with Ghino, but that his resolution was to go on, and he would see who dared to stop him. "My lord," quoth the man, with a great deal of humility, "you are now in a place where all excommunications are kicked out of doors; then please to oblige my master in this thing, it will be your best way." Whilst they were talking together, the place was surrounded with highwaymen, and the abbot, seeing himself a prisoner, went with a great deal of ill-will with the fellow to the castle, followed by his whole retinue, where he dismounted, and was lodged, by Ghino's appointment, in a poor, dark, little room, whilst every other person was well accommodated according to his respective station, and the carriages and all the horses taken exact care of. This being done, Ghino went to the abbot and said, "My lord, Ghino, whose guest you are, requests the favour of you to let him know whither you are going, and upon what account?" The abbot was wise enough to lay all his haughtiness aside for the present, and satisfied him with regard to both. Ghino went away at hearing this, and resolving to cure him without a bath, he ordered a great fire to be kept constantly in his room, coming to him no more till next morning, when he brought him two slices of toasted bread, in a fine napkin, and a large glass of his own rich white wine, saying to him, "My lord, when Ghino was young, he studied physic, and he declares that the very best medicine for a pain in the stomach is what he has now provided for you, of which these things are to be the beginning. Then take them, and have a good heart." The abbot, whose hunger was much greater than was his

will to joke, eat the bread, though with a great deal of indignation, and drank the glass of wine; after which he began to talk a little arrogantly, asking many questions, and demanding more particularly to see this Ghino. But Ghino passed over part of what he said as vain, and the rest he answered very courteously, declaring that Ghino meant to make him a visit very soon, and then left him. He saw him no more till next morning, when he brought him as much bread and wine as before, and in the same manner. And thus he continued during many days, till he found the abbot had eat some dried beans, which he had left purposely in the chamber, when he inquired of him, as from Ghino, how he found his stomach? The abbot replied, "I should be well enough were I out of this man's clutches. There is nothing I want now so much as to eat, for his medicines have had such an effect upon me, that I am fit to die with hunger." Ghino, then, having furnished a room with the abbot's own goods and provided an elegant entertainment, to which many people of the town were invited, as well as the abbot's own domestics, went the next morning to him, and said, "My lord, now you find yourself recovered, it is time for you to quit this infirmary." So he took him by the hand, and led him into the chamber, leaving him there with his own people; and as he went out to give orders about the feast, the abbot was giving an account how he had led his life in that place, whilst they declared that they had been used by Ghino with all possible respect. When the time came they sat down, and were nobly entertained, but still without Ghino's making himself known. But after the abbot had continued some days in that manner, Ghino had all the goods and furniture brought into a large room, and the horses were likewise led into the courtyard which was under it, when he inquired how his

lordship now found himself, or whether he was yet able to ride. The abbot made answer, that he was strong enough, and his stomach perfectly well, and that he only wanted to quit this man. Ghino then brought him into the room where all his goods were, shewing him also to the window, that he might take a view of his horses, when he said, "My lord, you must understand it was no evil disposition, but his being driven a poor exile from his own house, and persecuted with many enemies that forced Ghino di Tacco, whom I am, to be a robber upon the highways, and an enemy to the court of Rome. You seem, however, to be a person of honour; as, therefore, I have cured you of your pain in your stomach, I do not mean to treat you as I would do another person that should fall into my hands, that is to take what I please, but I would have you consider my necessity and then give me what you will yourself. Here is all that belongs to you; the horses you may see out of the window: take either part or the whole, just as you are disposed, and go or stay, as is most agreeable to you." The abbot was surprised to hear a highwayman talk in so courteous a manner, which did not a little please him; so, turning all his former passion and resentment into kindness and good-will, he ran with a heart full of friendship to embrace him: "I protest solemnly, that to procure the friendship of such a one as I take you to be, I would undergo more than what you have already made me suffer. Cursed be that evil fortune which has thrown you into this way of life!" So taking only a few of his most necessary things, and also of his horses, and leaving all the rest, he came back to Rome. The pope had heard of the abbot's being a prisoner, and though he was much concerned at it, yet upon seeing him, he inquired what benefit he had received from the baths? The abbot

replied, with a smile, "Holy father, I found a physician much nearer, who has cured me excellently well;" and he told him the manner of it, which made the pope laugh heartily, when, going on with his story, and moved with a truly generous spirit, he requested of his holiness one favour. The pope imagining he would ask something else, freely consented to grant it. Then said the abbot, "Holy father, what I mean to require is, that you would bestow a free pardon on Ghino di Tacco, my doctor, because of all people of worth that I ever met with, he certainly is most to be esteemed, and the damage he does is more the fault of fortune than himself. Change but his condition and give him something to live upon, according to his rank and station, and I dare say you will have the same opinion of him that I have." The pope, being of a noble spirit, and a great encourager of merit, promised to do so, if he was such a person as he reported, and, in the meantime, gave letters of safe conduct for his coming thither. Upon that assurance, Ghino came to court, when the pope was soon convinced of his worth, and reconciled to him, giving him the priory of an hospital, and creating him a knight. And there he continued as a friend and loyal servant to the holy church, and to the Abbot of Cligni, as long as he lived.

NOVEL III

Mithridanes envied the generosity of Nathan, and went to kill him; when, conversing together, without knowing him, and being informed in what manner he might do it, he went to meet him in a wood as he had directed. There he calls him to mind, is ashamed and becomes his friend.

THE abbot's extraordinary generosity seemed next to a miracle to all that heard it; when Philostratus was commanded to speak, who instantly said:—

Great, most noble ladies, was the magnificence of

the King of Spain; and that of the Abbot of Cligni something quite unusual; but perhaps it will appear no less strange to you to be told how a person, as a proof of his liberality to another, who thirsted after his blood, nay, and his very soul too, should contrive industriously to gratify him. And he had done so, if the other would have taken what was so offered, as I am going to shew you.

Most certain it is, if any faith may be given to the Genoese, and others that have been in those parts, that in the country of Cattaiò lived a person of noble extract, and rich beyond comparison, called Nathan, who having an estate adjoining to the great road which led from the east to the west, and being of a generous spirit, and desirous of shewing it by his good works, summoned together many master artificers, and in a very short time raised one of the most grand and beautiful palaces that ever was seen, furnishing it with everything necessary for the more honourable reception of persons of distinction. He had also great numbers of servants, and kept open house for all comers and goers, continuing this noble way of living, till not only the east but the west also resounded his fame. Being grown into years, and his hospitality no way abated, it happened that his renown reached the ears of a young gentleman named Mithridanes, living in a country not far from the other, who, thinking himself full as wealthy as Nathan, began to envy his fame and virtue, resolving to annul or cloud them both by a superior generosity. So he built such another palace as Nathan's, and was extravagantly generous to everybody that how famous he soon became it is needless to say. Now one day it happened as he was all alone in his palace-court, that a woman came in at one of the gates, and demanded alms, which she received; after

which she came in at a second, and was relieved a second time, and so on for twelve times successively, and returning the thirteenth, he said, "Good woman, you grow troublesome;" but yet he gave her. The old woman, at hearing these words, said, "The prodigious generosity of Nathan! O how greatly is it to be admired! I went in at all the thirty-two gates which are at his palace, as well as this, and received an alms at every one, without being known all the time, as it seemed to me, and here I come but thirteen, and am known and flouted!" and so went away without ever coming there more. Mithridanes, imagining that this concerning Nathan was a diminution of his own fame, grew extremely incensed, and said, "Alas! when shall I come up to Nathan in great things, not to say surpass him, as is my intention, when I fall short even in the smallest matters? Undoubtedly, it is all labour in vain, unless I dismiss him from the world, which, seeing old age ineffectual, I must do instantly with my own hands. So rising up in a passion, without making anyone acquainted with his design, he mounted his horse, taking very few attendants with him, and the third day he arrived at Nathan's palace, when he ordered his people not to seem to belong to him, but provide themselves with lodgings till they heard farther from him. Coming there towards the evening, and being left by himself, he found Nathan alone, not far from his palace, taking a walk for his amusement, in a very plain habit, when he, not knowing him, desired he would show him the way to Nathan's dwelling. Nathan cheerfully replied, "Son, there is nobody in this country can shew you better than myself; then, if you please, I will conduct you thither." The young gentleman replied, "I should be extremely obliged to you; but could wish, if it were possible, neither to be seen nor known by Nathan"—

"This also," quoth Nathan, "I will do for you, if it be your design." So he alighted, and walked along with him, falling agreeably into discourse together, till they came to the palace, when Nathan bid one of his servants take the horse, and he whispered in the fellow's ear for him to acquaint all the people in the house that none of them should let the gentleman know he was Nathan, which was done. Being entered into the palace, he put Mithridanes into a very fine apartment, where nobody should see him but those whom he had appointed to wait upon him; and shewed him all possible respect, himself constantly keeping him company.

After Mithridanes had been for some time with him, he asked with a great deal of reverence, who he was. When he replied, "I am an inferior servant of Nathan's, who have grown old in his service, and yet he never promoted me to anything more than what you see me; and, therefore though other people commend him, I have little reason to do so." These words gave Mithridanes some hopes that he might the better and more securely effect his base purpose. Nathan then inquired very courteously of him concerning who he was, and the occasion of his coming thither, offering him his best advice and assistance. Mithridanes hesitated a little upon that, but at length resolved to let him into his design; so, after a long preamble requesting secrecy, and that he would lend him a helping hand, he declared who he was, what he came thither for, and his inducement. Nathan, hearing his detestable resolution, was quite changed within himself; nevertheless, without any appearance thereof, he replied boldly, and with a steady countenance, "Mithridanes, your father was truly a noble person, nor are you willing to degenerate, having undertaken so glorious an enterprise as is that of being liberal to all

people; I do greatly commend the envy you bear to Nathan's virtue, because, were there many more men of the same principle, the world, though bad enough at present, would soon grow better. Your affair I shall most assuredly keep secret, which I can further more by my advice, than any help I am able to give you, and that in the following manner:—

"About half a mile from hence is a grove, where he generally takes a walk for a considerable time every morning; there you may easily meet with him, and do what you purpose. If you should kill him, in order to return home without any hindrance, do not go the way you came, but take a path that leads out of the grove to the left, which, though not so much frequented as the other, is yet a shorter way to your house, as well as more secure." When Mithridanes had received this instruction and Nathan was departed, he let his attendants, that were in the same house, know privately where they were to wait for him the next day. And early in the morning, Nathan arose, his mind being no way changed from the counsel given to Mithridanes, and went to the grove with a design of meeting with his death. Mithridanes also took his bow and sword, having no other weapon, and rode to the same place, where he saw Nathan walking at a distance by himself; and being minded before he put him to death, to hear what he had to say, he laid hold of the turban that was upon his head, and cried out "Old dotard! thou art a dead man." Nathan made no reply but this: "Then I have deserved it." Mithridanes hearing his voice, and looking in his face, found it was the same person that had so kindly received him, kept him company, and faithfully advised him: upon which his rage and malice were turned into shame and remorse and throwing away his sword, which he had ready drawn

to stab him, he dismounted, and fell with tears at his feet, saying, "My dearest father, I am now convinced of your liberality, considering what pains you have taken to bestow your life upon me, which I was very unjustly desirous of having. But God, more careful of my doing my duty than I was myself, opened the eyes of my understanding, which envy had closed, at a time when there was the greatest need of it. The more ready, therefore, you were to oblige me, so much the greater I acknowledge my remorse to be. Take that revenge then, of me which you think adequate to the nature of my crime." Nathan raised him up and embraced him, saying, "Son, your design, call it wicked, or what you will, needs neither your asking any pardon nor yet my granting it; because it was out of no hatred, but only a desire to excel. Be assured, then, there is nobody regards you more than I do, considering the greatness of your soul, which was given you not for the amassing of wealth, as is the case of misers, but the distribution of it; be not ashamed of your design of cutting me off, to become more famous, nor think I am at all surprised at it: the greatest monarchs, by no other art than that of killing not one man only, as you would have done, but infinite numbers, destroying whole countries, and laying cities in ruins, have enlarged their empire, and consequently their fame. Therefore, to kill me alone, to make yourself famous, is neither new nor strange." Mithridanes far from excusing his evil intent, but commanding Nathan's honest gloss upon it, proceeded so far as to tell him, that he wondered exceedingly how he could bring himself to such a readiness to die, and be even advising and aiding to it.

When Nathan replied, "I would not have you wonder at all at it; for ever since I have been my own master, and resolved to do that wherein you have

endeavoured to follow my example, nobody ever came to my house, whom I did not content to the utmost of my power, as to what was required of me. Now it was your fortune to come for my life; therefore, that you should not be the only person who went away ungratified, I resolved to give it, advising you in such a manner that you might be secure of it without losing your own. Therefore I conjure you to take it, if it will be any pleasure to you: I do not know how I can better bestow it. Eighty years have I had the full enjoyment of it; and, according to the course of nature, and as it fares with other men, and all other things, I can keep it but very little time longer: so I hold it better to part with it of my own accord, as I have done my wealth and estate, than to keep it till it is wrested from me by nature. A hundred years are no great matter; what then, are six or eight, which are all that are left me? Take it, then, I say again, if you please, for I never met with any one before that desired it, nor do I expect any other will accept it, if you do not. Besides, the longer it is kept, of the less value it grows, so take it once for all, whilst it is worth something." Mithridanes was extremely confounded and said, "God forbid that, so far from touching a thing of the value your life is, I should even desire it as I did just now. Instead of lessening your years, I would willingly add of my own, if it were possible."—"And would you," he replied "if you could? That would be doing to you what I have done yet to no one, I mean robbing you to enrich myself. But I will tell you what you shall do: you shall come and live here, and be called Nathan, and I will go to your house, and take the name of Mithridanes." He replied, "If I knew how to behave as well as you do, I should readily embrace your offer; but as I am sensible I should only

lessen the fame of Nathan, I shall never seek to impair that in another which I cannot increase in myself, so pray excuse me." With these and more such compliments, they returned to the palace, where Nathan shewed great respect to Mithridanes, confirming him in his great and noble design; who, being disposed to return home, took his leave, fully convinced that he could never come up to Nathan in liberality.

NOVEL IV

Signor Gentil de' Carisendi takes a lady out of her grave, whom he had loved, and who was buried for dead. She recovers, and is brought to bed of a son, which he presents along with the lady to her husband.

It seemed strange to them all for a man to be lavish of his blood, and it was agreed that Nathan had outdone both the King of Spain and the Abbot of Cligni. When the king signified his will to Lauretta that she should begin, which she did to this effect:—

Great, as well as beautiful, most noble ladies, are the incidents which have been already related, nor does anything seem wanting, in my opinion, to bring our argument home to the subject, but that we take in the affair of love, which affords matter enough for discourse upon any question whatever. For this reason, then, and as it is always an agreeable topic to youth, I shall mention the generosity of an enamoured young gentleman, which, all things considered, will appear, perhaps, no way inferior to the others: if it be true that people give away their wealth, forget animosities, run a thousand risks of their lives, and, what is more, their fame and honour too, and all to come at the thing desired.

In Bologna was a knight, of great consequence and worth, called Gentil Carisendi, who was in love with Catalina, the wife of Niccoluccio Caccianimico; and, meeting with no return, he went in a kind of despair to Modena, whither he was called as Podesta. In the meantime, Niccoluccio being absent from Bologna, and his lady at a country-house about three miles distant, where she was gone to stay, being with child, it happened she was taken with an hysterick fit, which quite extinguished all signs of life, so that her physician declared her dead. And because her acquaintance said, they had been informed by her that she was not quick with child, she was immediately buried in a vault belonging to a neighbouring church. This was soon signified by a friend to Signor Gentil, who, though he had never received the least mark of her favour, grieved extremely, saying at last to himself, "Behold, my dear Catalina, you are dead; living you would never deign me one kind look; now, however, that you cannot prevent it, I will please myself with a kiss." So, giving orders that his departure should be a secret, towards evening he mounted his horse, and taking a servant along with him, he rode directly to the vault she was buried which he opened, and laying down by her, he put his cheek to hers, and wept. At length, laying his hands for some time upon her bosom he thought he felt something beat, when, throwing all fear aside, and attending more nicely to the circumstance, he was convinced she had a small spark of life remaining in her; therefore, by the help of his servant, he took her out of the vault as gently as possible, and laying her upon the horse, he brought her privately to his house at Bologna. There his mother, a worthy, good lady, having the whole account from him, by warm baths and other means, soon brought her to

herself; when, after fetching a deep sigh, she said, "Alas! where am I?" The good lady replied, "Make yourself easy, you are in a very good place." Looking then all round, and seeing Signor Gentil before her, her astonishment was great, and she desired his mother to inform her by what means she had come thither. He then related everything to her; at which she was concerned, and, after giving due thanks, she requested of his love and generous deportment, to attempt nothing contrary to her honour and that of her husband, and that, when it was daylight, he would suffer her to go home. "Madam," he replied, "whatever my love has been heretofore, I promise both now and hereafter, seeing I have been so fortunate to bring you to life, to use you with the same regard as I would my sister; but, as I think myself entitled to some reward, I must insist upon your granting me one favour."—"Sir," said she, "You may command anything from me consistent with modesty." He made answer, "Madam, your relations and all the people of Bologna are assured of your being dead; therefore I insist only upon your staying here with my mother till I return from Modena, which will be very soon. My reason is, that I would then, in the presence of the principal inhabitants here, make a valuable and solemn present of you to your husband." The lady, knowing her obligations to the knight, and that his demand was honourable, consented, and gave her word to abide by it, notwithstanding she longed extremely to gratify her relations with the news of her being alive. And whilst they were talking, she felt labour-pains come upon her, and she was soon delivered of a son, which added greatly to their joy. Signor Gentil ordered that she should have the same care taken of her as if she had been his own wife, and then returned privately to

Modena. There he continued till the expiration of his office, and the morning he was to come home, he ordered a great entertainment to be made at his house, to which Niccoluccio Caccianimico, with many of the principal citizens, were invited: and after he had dismounted, and found the company waiting for him, understanding too that the lady and child were both very well, he received them all with a great deal of joy; and dinner was immediately served up in the most magnificent manner possible. Towards the end, having concerted everything beforehand with the lady, he addressed himself to his guests in the following manner: "Gentlemen, I remember to have heard of a pretty custom in Persia, that when anyone has a mind to shew the greatest respect in his power to any of his friends, that he invites them to his house, and produces that thing, be what it will, wife, mistress, or daughter, that is most dear to him, declaring thereby that he would, if he was able, lay his very heart before them. This custom I mean to introduce at Bologna. You do me honour with your company at this feast, and I will return it, by shewing that thing which is the most dear to me of all that I have in the world, or ever shall possess. But I must first beg your solution of a difficulty which I am going to start to you.

"A certain person had a very honest and trusty servant, who was taken extremely ill, whom, without more to do, he sent out into the street in that condition; when a stranger, out of mere compassion, took him into his house, and with a great deal of trouble and expense had him restored to his former health. Now I would gladly know whether the first master has any right to complain of the second, for keeping him in his service, and refusing to restore him." This occasioned a great

deal of argument, and all agreed at last in opinion, leaving Niccoluccio Caccionimico, who was an elegant speaker to report it. He, therefore, after commanding the Persian custom said, they were all persuaded that the first master had no right, after he had not only abandoned him, but thrown him away as it were; and that, on account of the kindness done to him, he justly belonged to the second, who offered no violence or injury to the first in detaining him. The rest of the company, being all wise and worthy persons, declared that they joined in opinion with Niccoluccio. When the knight, pleased with the answer, and having it too from Niccoluccio, affirmed that those were his sentiments, adding, "It is now time for me to honour you according to promise." So he sent two of his servants to the lady, whom he had taken care to be very gaily dressed desiring her to favour his guests with her company. Accordingly, she came into the hall, followed by two servants, with the little infant in her arms. And after she had seated herself, he said, "Behold, this is what I value beyond everything else; see if you think I am in the right." The gentlemen all praised her extremely, pronouncing her worthy of his esteem: and after looking more nicely at her, many of them were going to have owned her, had it not been that they thought her dead. But none viewed her so much as Niccoluccio, who, the knight having stepped a little aside, grew impatient to know who she was; and unable any longer to contain himself, demanded of her if she was a citizen or stranger. The lady, hearing this from her husband, could scarcely refrain from giving him an answer, yet, in regard to her injunctions, she held her peace. Another inquired whether that was her child; and a third whether she was wife, or any relation to Signor Gentil. Still she made no reply to any. So when the

knight returned, one of the company said, "Sir, this is really a pretty creature, but she appears to be dumb: is she actually so?"—"Gentlemen," he replied, "her silence is no small argument of her virtue."—"Tell us, then," quoth one, "who she is."—"That I will," said the knight, "with all my heart, if you will promise me in the mean time that none of you stir from your places till I have made an end." This being agreed, and the tables all removed, he went and sat down by her, saying, "Gentlemen, this lady is that good and faithful servant of whom I proposed the question; who, being set at nought by her friends, and thrown into the street, as it were for a thing of no account, was by me with great care taken up, and redeemed from death, and from so terrible an object as she once was, brought to what you now see. But, for your more perfect understanding of what has happened, I will make it plain to you in a few words." So he began from his being first enamoured, and related everything, particularly that had happened, to the great amazement of the hearers; adding, at last, "For these reasons, if you stick to what you said just now, and Niccoluccio especially, the lady is mine, and nobody has any right to demand her from me." No reply was made to this, but all stood expecting to hear what he had further to say. In the meantime, Niccoluccio and the rest of the company as well as the lady, were so affected, that they all wept. But Signor Gentil arose, and taking the child in his arms, and the lady by the hand, he went towards Niccoluccio, and said, "Rise, my friend; behold I do not give you your wife, whom you and her relations had thrown away, but I bestow this lady upon you, as an acquaintance of mine, along with her little son, which is yours, and whom I have called by my own name: and I entreat you not to have the worse opinion of her,

for having been three months in my house; for I call Heaven to witness, that, though my love was the cause of her being preserved, she has lived with the same honour in my house, along with my mother, as she could have done with her own parent." Then, turning to the lady, he said, "Madame, I now acquit you of your promise, and give you freely up to your husband." So giving him the lady and the child into his arms, he returned, and sat down. Niccoluccio received them with the greater joy, as it was the more unexpected, loading the knight with infinite thanks whilst the company, who could not refrain from weeping, highly commended his generosity, as did every one also that heard it. The lady now was brought to her own house with great demonstrations of joy, and the people all beheld her with the same wonder as if she had been raised from the dead. Moreover, the knight was in the greatest esteem ever after, both with her and Niccoluccio, as well as their relations and friends.

What will you say, then, ladies? Is a king's giving away his crown and sceptre, an abbot's reconciling a malefactor to the pope, or an old man's offering his throat to an enemy's dagger, anything like this action of Signor Gentil's? who, being in the bloom and heat of youth, and seeming to have a good title to that which other people's carelessness had thrown away, and he by good fortune happened to pick up, not only restrained his desire, much to his honour, but generously resigned what he had entirely coveted, and sought at all events to possess. To me they seem no way comparable.

NOVEL V

Dianora requires Ansaldo to present her with a garden in January as beautiful as in May. He engages a necromancer to do it. Her husband, upon this, gives her leave to keep her word with Ansaldo; who, hearing of the husband's generosity, quits her of her promise: and the necromancer likewise takes nothing for his trouble.

SIGNOR Gentil was extolled to the very skies by the whole assembly, when the king ordered Emilia to follow; who immediately, as though she were desirous of speaking, began in this manner:—

There is no one but must allow that Signor Gentil did a very noble action, but to say that nothing greater could be done is saying too much, as I shall shew in a very short novel.

In the country of Frioli, which, though very cold, is yet beautiful with many pleasant mountains, fine rivers and crystal springs, is a place called Udine, where lived a worthy lady, name Dianora, the wife of a very agreeable man, and one of great wealth, called Gilberto. Now she had taken the fancy of a great and noble lord, called Ansaldo, one of extraordinary generosity and prowess, and known to all the country; who used frequently to solicit her with messages and offers of love, but in vain. At length, being quite wearied with his importunity, and seeing that he still persisted notwithstanding her repeated denials, she resolved to rid herself of him by a new, and as she thought, impossible demand. So she said to his emissary one day, "Good woman, you have often told me that Ansaldo loves me beyond all the world, and have offered me great presents on his part, which he may keep to himself, for I shall never be prevailed upon to a compliance in that manner. Could I be assured, indeed, that his love is really such as you say, then I should certainly be brought

to return it: therefore, if he will convince me of that by a proof which I shall require, I will instantly be at his service." "What is it, then," quoth the good woman, "that you desire him to do?" "It is this," she replied: "I would have a garden in the month of January, which is now coming on, as full of green herbs, flowers, and trees laden with fruit, as though it were the month of May: unless he does this for me, charge him to trouble me no more, for that I will instantly make a complaint to my husband and all my friends."

He being acquainted with the demand, which seemed next to an impossibility, and knowing that it was contrived on purpose to deprive him of all hopes of success, resolved yet to try all possible means in such a case, sending to every part of the world to find out a person able to assist him; when at length he met with a magician, who would undertake it for a large sum of money; and having agreed upon a price, he waited impatiently for the time of its being done. On the first of January, therefore, at night, the cold being extreme, and everything covered with snow, this wise man, in a meadow near to the city, made one of the finest gardens spring up that ever was seen, filled with all kinds of herbs, flowers and fruits, which Ansaldo saw with infinite pleasure, and picking some of the fairest fruits and flowers, he sent them privately to the lady, inviting her to come and see the garden which she had required, in order to be convinced of his love, and that she might call to mind the promise she had made, and so be reputed a woman of her word. The lady viewing the present, and hearing also from many people of this wonderful garden, began to repent of what she had done. But with all this repentance, being still desirous of seeing strange sights, she went thither with many more ladies, and having highly commended it returned home

sorrowful enough, thinking of her engagement. She continued so very uneasy, that her husband at last perceived it, and demanded the reason. For some time she was ashamed to speak, but being constrained at last, she related the whole thing. Gilberto was greatly disturbed about it, till, considering the upright intention of his lady in the affair, he began to be something pacified, and said, "No wise and virtuous lady would ever receive any messages, or make any conditions with regard to her chastity. Words have a more ready admittance to the heart than many people imagine, and with lovers nothing is impossible. You were highly to blame first to listen, and afterwards to covenant: but as I know the purity of your intention, and to free you from your engagement, I will grant what nobody else would do in such a case. For fear of this necromancer, who, by Ansaldo's instigation, may do us some mischief if you disappoint him, I consent that you go to Ansaldo, and if you can by any means get quit of that tie with safety to your honour, that you endeavour to do it, otherwise that you comply, in deed, though you will be chaste and pure." She wept and shewed great reluctance, but he insisted upon it. So early in the morning, without any great care to make herself fine, she went with her woman and two men-servants to Ansaldo's house, who, hearing the lady was there, arose with great surprise, and called the wise man, saying to him, "You shall now see the effect of your skill." So he went to meet her, and shewed her into a handsome room, where there was a great fire, and sitting down together, he said "Madame, I beg, if the long regard I have had for you merit any reward, that you would please to tell me why you come here at this time, and with this company." She blushed, and replied, with tears, "Sir, it was neither love, nor yet regard to my

promise, but merely my husband's order, who shewing more respect to the labours of your inordinate love than his honour and mine, had forced me to come hither; therefore, as it is commanded, I submit to your pleasure." If Ansaldo was surprised at the sight of the lady, he was now much more so at hearing her talk; and, being moved with Gilberto's generosity, his love was changed into compassion, and he said, "Madame, Heaven forbid that I should ever take away the honour of a person who has shewed such pity for my love: therefore you are as safe with me as if you were my sister, and when it seems good to you, you may depart, upon condition that you tender your husband, in my name, those thanks which you think are due to his great generosity, requesting him for the time to come, to esteem me always as his brother and faithful servant." The lady, overjoyed with this, replied, "All the world, sir, could never make me believe, when I consider your character, that anything could have happened on my coming hither, otherwise than now it has done; for which I shall always be obliged to you." So she took her leave, and returned to her husband, when, relating what had happened, it proved the occasion of a strict friendship ever after between him and Ansaldo. The necromancer now being about to receive his reward, and having observed Gilberto's generosity to Ansaldo, and that of Ansaldo to the lady, said, "As Gilberto has been so liberal of his honour, and you of your love, you shall give me leave to be the same with regard to my pay: knowing it then to be worthily employed, I design it shall be yours." Ansaldo was ashamed, and pressed him to take all or part, but in vain. And after the third day was passed that the necromancer had taken away his garden, and was willing to depart, he thankfully dismissed him, having extinguished his inordinate

desires out of a mere principle of honour. What say you now, ladies? Shall we prefer the dead lady and the love of Gentil, grown cold, as destitute of all hope, to the liberality of Ansaldo, who loved more than ever, and who was fired with the greater expectation, since the prey so long pursued was then in his power? It is mere folly to suppose that generosity can ever be compared to this.

NOVEL VI

Old king Charles, surnamed the Victorious, being in love with a young lady, and ashamed afterwards of his folly, marries both her and her sister much to their advantage.

WHO can recount the various disputes that arose amongst the company, whether Gilberto's generosity, or Ansaldo's, or, lastly, the necromancer's, with regard to Dianora, was the greatest? Surely it would be too tedious at this time. But the king, after suffering them to dispute a while, ordered Flammetta to put an end to the debate; who began presently to this effect:—

Ladies, I was always of opinion that in such company as ours, people should speak so fully as to leave no room for doubt concerning the meaning of anything that is advanced; for disputes more properly belong to students in the schools than to us, who can scarcely manage our wheels and our distaffs. Therefore, seeing you have been already embroiled, I shall leave something of doubt which I was going to mention, to relate an affair of no insignificant person, but of a most mighty king, stating how he behaved with regard to his honour.

You must all have heard of king Charles the Ancient, or the First, by whose glorious enterprise and great victory obtained over king Manfredi, the Ghibelline faction was driven out of Florence, and the Guelphs restored. On which account a certain knight, called Neri de gli

Uberti, departed with his whole family and great store of wealth, meaning yet to live under the protection of no other king; and choosing a solitary place, with a design to end his days in quiet, he went to Castello da Mare where he purchased, about a bow-shot from all other houses, amongst the olives and chestnuts with which that place abounds, a little estate, and built a small convenient house upon it, by the side of which was a most delightful garden, and in the middle of that, according to our taste, as there was a great command of water, he made a fine canal, storing it well with fish; and attending only to the care of his garden, it happened that King Charles came during the summer to amuse himself at Castello da Mare for a few days; when, hearing of Neri's fine garden, he had a great desire to see it; and, considering he was of the adverse party, he resolved to use the more familiarity towards him; so he sent him word, that he and four friends should come and sup with him the next evening in his garden. This was an agreeable message to Signor Neri, who made the necessary provision for his entertainment, receiving him afterwards in the best manner he was able. The king highly commended both the houses and garden; and the table being spread by the side of the canal, he sat down, ordering Count Guido di Monforte, who was amongst his attendants, to sit on one side, and Signor Neri on the other; and as for the remaining there, they sat as they were placed by Signor Neri. Supper now was served up in the most delicate order, with the best and richest wine, greatly to the king's liking; and whilst he was eating, with great admiration of the beauty of the place, two young damsels, of about fifteen years of age, entered the garden, with their hair like golden wire, most curiously curled, and garlands of flowers upon their heads, whilst

their mien and deportment bespoke them rather angels than mortal creatures: their garments were of fine linen cloth, as white as snow, which were girt round their waists, and hung in large folds from thence to their feet. She that came first had two fishing nets, which she carried in her left hand upon her shoulder, and in her right was a long stick; the other that followed had a frying pan upon her left shoulder, and under the same arm a faggot of wood, with a trevet in her hand, and in the other hand a bottle of oil and a lighted torch; at which the king was greatly surprised, and waited attentively to see what it meant.

The damsels being come before him, made their obeisance in the humblest and modestest manner; and at the entrance of the pond, she that had the pan with the other things, laid them down upon the ground; and taking up the stick which the other carried, they both stepped into the canal, the water of which came up to their breasts. A servant immediately kindled a fire, and laying the pan upon the trevet, and putting oil therein, he began to wait till the damsels should throw him some fish. So one of them beating the places where the fish lay, and the other holding the net, they soon caught fish enough, to the great diversion of the king; and throwing them to the servant, who put them alive as it were into the pan, they took out some of the finest, as they had been before instructed, and cast them upon the table before the king, Count Guido, and their father. The king was highly delighted with seeing them jump about, and he took and tossed them about in like manner, and so they diverted themselves, till the servant had fried that which he had in his pan, which was set before the king by Signor Neri's order, more as a curiosity than anything nice and dainty. The damsels, thinking they

had now done enough, came out of the water, with their garments hanging about them in such a manner as scarcely to conceal any part of their bodies, and modestly saluting the king as before, they returned into the house. The king, with the count and gentleman that attended, were much taken with their extraordinary beauty and modest behaviour: the king especially, who was perfectly lost in admiration, and finding a secret passion stealing upon him, without knowing which to prefer, they were so exactly alike, he turned to Signor Neri, and asked who those two damsels were? When he replied, "My lord, they are my daughters, born at a birth, one of whom is called Gineura, the pretty, and the other Isotto, the fair." The king commended them very much, and advised him to marry them; but he excused himself, alleging that he was not in circumstances to do it. Nothing now remained to be served up but the dessert, when the two ladies came attired in rich satin, with two silver dishes in their hands, full of all manner of fruit, which they set before the king; and retiring afterwards to some distance, they sang a song beginning in the following manner:

Thy power, O love! who can resist? &c.,

with such exquisite sweetness, that it seemed to the king as if choirs of angels were descended from heaven for his entertainment. No sooner was the song ended, but they fell upon their knees before him, to take their leave which the king, though he was secretly grieved at it, seemed graciously to comply with. When supper was concluded, the king, with his attendants, mounted their horses, and returned to the palace, where, being unable to forego the love that he had conceived for Gineura, for whose sake he also loved her sister, as resembling each other, he grew so uneasy that he could think of nothing else;

upon which account he cultivated, under other pretences, a strict friendship with the father, and used frequently to visit him at his garden, in order to see Gineura; till unable to contain any longer, seeing he could think of no better way, he resolved to take not one only, but both from him by force, and he signified his intention to Count Guido, who being a nobleman of strict honour, said to this effect: "My liege, I am greatly surprised at what you now say, and more perhaps than any other person would be, since I have known you more, even from your infancy, and as I never remember any such thing of you in your youth, when love has the greatest power over us, it seems so odd and out of the way, that I can scarcely give credit to it. Did it become me to reprove you, I know very well what I might say, considering that you are yet in arms in a kingdom newly conquered, amongst a people not known to you, abounding with treachery and deceit, and have many great and weighty affairs upon hands; yet you can sit down at ease in such circumstances, and give way to such an idle passion as love. This is not like a great king, so much as inglorious stripling. And what is worse, you say you are resolved to take the two daughters away from a poor gentleman, whom he had to wait upon you out of his abundant respect, as well as to shew his great confidence in you, believing you to be a generous prince, and not a rapacious wolf. Have you so soon forgotten that it was Manfredi's taking the same liberties which opened your way to this kingdom? Can there be a baser crime than to take away from one that honours you, his honour, his hope and entire comfort? What will people say in such a case? Do you think it any excuse, his being of a different party? Is this kingly justice, to treat people in that manner, be they of what party they will, that throw themselves under your

protection? It was great glory to conquer Manfredi, but, let me tell you, it will be much greater to conquer yourself. You, therefore, who are ordained to correct vice in others, learn to subdue your own; curb that unruly appetite, nor stain with so foul a blot the character you have so gloriously acquired." These words touched the king to the quick, and so much the more as he knew them to be true: therefore he sighed, and said, "Count, I hold it an easy conquest over any enemy, however formidable, compared to one's own passion; but, be the difficulty ever so great, such is the force of your words, that before many days are past, I will convince you, if I know how to conquer others, that I am able also to withstand myself." So he went to Naples soon after, when, to put it out of his power to do a base thing, as well as to reward the knight for the favours shewn him, he resolved, however grating it seemed, to give another the possession of that which he himself coveted, to marry both the ladies, not as Signor Neri's daughters, but his own. Bestowing, then, large fortunes upon them, Gineura, the pretty, he gave to Signor Maffeo da Palizzi; and Isotto, the fair, to Signor Gulielmo della Magna, both worthy knights, retiring himself afterwards to Puglia; where, with great pains and trouble, he got the better at last of his passion and lived with ease and quiet ever after. Now some people, perhaps, may say, that it is a small thing for a king to have bestowed two ladies in marriage. I allow it; but for a king to give away the very lady that he himself was in love with, and without plucking the least bud, flower, or fruit of his love, that I will maintain to be great indeed. Such, then, were the virtues of this most generous king; rewarding the courtesy of a noble knight, shewing a great and proper regard to his beloved fair one, and subduing his own desires with strict resolution and honour.

NOVEL VII

King Pietro, knowing that a lady was love-sick for him, makes her a visit, and marries her to a worthy gentleman; then kissing her forehead, calls himself ever afterwards her knight.

FLAMMETTA'S novel was concluded, and the manly king's generosity much commended, although there were some of the Ghibelline faction present that seemed not to relish it; when Pampinea having the king's command, began as follows:—

Every one must praise the king for what he did, excepting such as bear him ill-will upon some other account; but as I now call to mind a thing no less praiseworthy, that was done by an enemy of his to a lady of our city, I shall beg leave to relate it.

At the time when the French were driven out of Sicily, there dwelt at Palermo, a Florentine apothecary, called Bernardo Puccini, one of very great substance, and who had an only daughter, a fine young lady, and of age to be married. Now King Pietro being become lord of the whole island made a great feast for all his barons at Palermo; and, justing in the street called Catalonia, it chanced that Bernardo's daughter, whose name was Lisa, observed him, as she was in company with other ladies, out of a window with great pleasure, and she gazed so long, that at last she found herself deeply in love.

The feast being over, she returned home, still thinking of nothing but this great and exalted love. But what troubled her most was the consideration of her mean rank, which left her no hopes of success; nevertheless, she would by no means withdraw her affection, at the same time that she was afraid to disclose it. Love thus getting every day more power over her, the fair maid, unable to hold up any longer, fell at last into a languishing sickness, wasting manifestly like snow before the sun. The father

and mother, by their own continual care, as well as the help of physicians, did all in their power to relieve her, but to no purpose; she despaired in her love, and so desired to die. Now one day it happened, as the father was offering his best services, that a thought came into her head, to make her love known to the king before her death, and she desired that Minuccio d' Arezzo might come to her. This Minuccio was a fine singer, and often with the king. The father, therefore, supposing that she had a mind to be a little diverted, sent for him; when he came and played a tune or two upon his violin, and sang her several songs, which, instead of appeasing, only added to her love. At length she expressed a desire to speak to him in private; so every one else having left the room, she spoke to this purpose: "Minuccio, I have chosen to entrust you with a secret, hoping in the first place, that you will only reveal it to the person concerned; and secondly, I desire you would assist me to the utmost of your power. The case, you must know, is this: the day of King Pietro's rejoicing for his accession, I fell so much in love on seeing him run his tilts, that it has brought me to what you see. Knowing, therefore, how ill-placed my love is on a king, and not being able to shake it off, or any way impair it, I have resolved, seeing it is too grievous to be borne, to die. It is true, I shall die with great uneasiness, unless he knows it first; and as I have nobody that I can trust in this affair but yourself, I therefore commit it entirely to you, in hope that you will not refuse me this service; and when you have done to let me know it, that so, being disburdened, I may die with more ease and comfort." Minuccio was surprised both at the greatness of her soul, and her cruel resolution; and being grieved for her, he thought of a way whereby he might fairly do her service; so he said,

“Madam, be assured I will never deceive you: I commend your fancy in the choice of so great a king, and offer you my best assistance, hoping that before three days are expired, I shall bring you news that will be agreeable. To lose no time, then, I will go directly about it.”—She promised to comfort herself as well as she could, and wished him success. He consequently went to one Mico da Siene, a tolerable poet in those days, who, at his request, composed the following song.

CHORUS

Go, love, and to my lord declare
 The torment which for him I find;
 Go, say I die, whilst still my fear
 Forbids me to declare my mnd.

I

With hands uplifted, I thee pray,
 O love! that thou wouldest haste away,
 And gently to my lord impart
 The warmest wishes of my heart;
 Declare how great my sorrows seem,
 Which sighing, blushing, I endure for him.
 Go, love, &c.

II

Why was I not so bold to tell,
 For once, the passion that I feel?
 To him for whom I grieve alone,
 The anguish of my heart make known?
 He might rejoice to hear my grief
 Awaits his single pleasure for relief.
 Go, love, &c.

III

But if this my request be vain,
 Nor other means of help remain,
 Yet say, that when in armour bright
 He march'd as if equipp'd for fight,
 Amidst his chief, that fatal day
 I saw, and gaz'd my very heart away.
 Go, love, &c.

These words he set to a soft languishing air, as the subject required: and the third day he went to court, where the king was at dinner; and being ordered to give him a song, he began that, in such an easy, sweet manner, that all the people in the room seemed converted to statues; so silently, so attentively did they stand to listen. But the king was more affected than all the rest, and after Minuccio had made an end, he demanded why he had never heard that song before? "My lord," the other replied, "the words and tune both are not yet three days old." The king then inquiring whom it was they concerned, he made answer, "That I can only tell your majesty." The king being desirous of knowing it, went with him into the chamber, as soon as the cloth was taken away, when Minuccio related the whole affair; with which the king seemed greatly pleased, and desired him to go directly to her, and assure her, on his part, that he would certainly visit her that evening. Minuccio, overjoyed to be the bearer of such news, went immediately with his violin, and after relating to her in private what had been done, he sung her the very song. From that time there appeared great signs of amendment; and, without any one having the least suspicion of it, she waited in full expectation of the evening, when she should see her lord. The king, who was a gracious and good prince, having thought much of what Minuccio told him, felt more and more pity for the lady, as being no stranger to her extraordinary beauty. So, getting on horseback in the evening, as if he was taking a ride, he rode to this apothecary's house, desiring to see a fine garden that he had; where after walking for some time together, the king inquired what was become of his daughter, and whether she was yet married? Bernardo replied, "My lord, she is not married; she has been extremely ill, and is still so, though

we think since nine o'clock, that she is wonderfully mended." The king knew what that amendment meant, and said, "In good truth it would be a pity to lose such a pretty young lady; let us go and see her." So he went with two attendants only, and the father, into the chamber: and going to the bed-side, where she sat raised up, and full of expectation of his coming, and taking her by the hand, he said, "Fair maid, how comes it that you are ill? You are young, and should be a delight to others, then why will you suffer this illness to prey upon you? For my sake be comforted, and get well." The lady, feeling the touch of his hand, whom she loved beyond all the world, though she could not help blushing, thought herself in perfect paradise, and answered as well as she could: "My lord, by opposing my little strength to too heavy a burden, I have happened to languish in this manner; but you will soon see an amendment." Only the king knew her covert way of speaking, and after he had stayed some time longer with her, and encouraged her as much as possible, he took his leave. This condescension of the king's was much commended, and thought a great honour both to the apothecary and his daughter, who was as much pleased with it as any other lady could be with her lover; and being assisted by better hopes, became in a little time quite well, and more fair than ever. Some time after, the king, having consulted with the queen about it, on a day appointed, went on horseback, attended by many of his barons, to the apothecary's house, and walking in the garden, he sent for him and his daughter. Presently after the queen came with a great number of ladies, and after they had spent some time in diversion, the king and queen called Lisa to them, when he said, "Fair lady, your love for me has obtained you this favour, with which, for my sake, I beg you

would be satisfied; what I mean is, to give you a husband, but still I would preserve the character of your knight, without requesting anything in return but a kiss." She blushed, and replied, with a low and humble voice, to this effect: "My lord, were it to be publicly known that I had fixed my affection upon your majesty, I doubt not but I should be reckoned the greatest of fools, and unacquainted with my own meanness as much as your grandeur. But God, who knows my heart, is my judge, that I then thought of you as a great king, and of myself as an apothecary's daughter, and was sensible how ill it became me to fix my love upon an object so infinitely above me. But your majesty knows, as well as myself, there is no choice in love, it is fancy only; I opposed my feeble might, which was all I could do; so that I did, do still, and always shall love you. Since, therefore, I have found myself captivated by you, I thought it my duty to make your will my own; if then, you would command anything else, I should certainly obey it. But for you, who are my king, to be called my knight, that it becomes me not to speak to, any more than the kiss, which you require as the sole recompence of my love without leave from our lady the queen. Nevertheless, for your great kindness towards me, as well as that of the queen, may Heaven shower down its blessings upon you both; for my part I am able to make no return." Here she was silent. The queen was pleased with the lady's reply, thinking her as prudent as the king had reported her; who instantly called for her father and mother, and finding they approved of his intention, he sent for a young gentleman of small fortune, whose name was Predicone, and caused him, not unwillingly, to espouse her; when, besides many jewels and other valuable presents given by them both, he bestowed Ceffalu and Calatabellotta,

two very considerable estates, upon them, saying, "These I give by way of dowry with your wife; what I intend for yourself, you shall see some time hence." Then, turning to her, he said, "I must now receive the fruit that is due to me from your love;" and he just saluted her forehead. So the marriage was solemnized, to the great joy both of her husband, father and mother: and many report that the king was very constant to his promise; for that, as long as he lived, he always styled himself her knight, and never carried any other token of favour upon his arms, but what she sent him.—Such actions as these gain the hearts of the people, serve as an example for others to imitate, and secure at last an everlasting fame. But there are few now-a-days that trouble their heads about that, the greatest part of our princes being rather cruel tyrants.

NOVEL VIII

Sophronia, believing herself to be the wife of Gisippus, is really married to Titus Quintus Fulvius, who carries her to Rome; where Gisippus arrives some time after in great distress, and, thinking himself despised by Titus, confesses himself guilty of a murder, in order to put an end to his life. Titus recollects him, and to save him, accuses himself; which, when the murderer sees, he delivers himself up as the guilty person. On which account they are all set at liberty by Octavius, and Titus marries Gisippus to his sister, and gives him half his estate.

PHILOMENA now, by the king's order (Pampinea having ceased to speak and King Pietro being much commended by the whole company, but especially the Ghibelline lady) began in this manner:—

We all know, ladies, that kings can do, as often as they are so disposed, everything that is great and noble. Such things are more particularly required of them. He,

therefore that does his duty does well; but yet we should not wonder in that manner, and extol them so highly for it, as we would do another, who, not having the ability, has less incumbent upon him, and yet does as much. If, therefore, you commend the actions of princes to that degree, and think them glorious, I make no doubt but those of our equals will be much more admired by you, when they are found to resemble, or even exceed them. I shall, therefore, relate the great and noble behaviour of two citizens and friends.

At the time when Octavius Cæsar (afterwards Augustus) governed the empire as one of the triumvirate, there dwelt at Rome a gentleman called Publius Quintus Fulvius, who having a son named Titus Quintus Fulvius, a youth of wonderful parts and learning, sent him to Athens to study philosophy; recommending him to a nobleman there, called Chremes, who was his old friend. This noble person kept him in his own house, as a companion to a son of his own, named Gisippus, and they were both put under the tuition of a philosopher, whose name was Aristippus. Being brought up thus together, their ways and tempers were so conformable, that a brotherly affection and strict friendship sprung up between them, inseparable by any other accident than death; nor had they either happiness or repose but in each other's company. They began their studies together, and proceeded, as they had each an uncommon genius, to the greatest depths of philosophy with equal steps and marvellous applause. Thus they went on for three years, to the great joy of Chremes, who seemed to have the same regard for both; when it chanced that he died, being stricken in years, at which they expressed a like concern: nor could it be well said which was most disconsolate. In a few months afterwards, the friends and relations of

Gisippus came to see him, and, along with Titus, began to comfort and persuade him to take a wife, recommending a citizen of theirs, a lady of extraordinary beauty and family, about sixteen years of age. The time of their marriage drawing near, Gisippus prevailed upon Titus, who had not yet seen her, to go with him to pay her a visit. Coming then to the house, and she seating herself between them, Titus, considering the charms of his friend's contracted spouse, began to view her with the greater attention; and being immoderately taken with every part and every feature of her, and praising them secretly to himself, he soon grew as much enamoured as ever man in the world was with a woman, without however shewing the least sign of it. After they had stayed some time, they left her, and returned home; and Titus, going into his chamber by himself, began to reflect upon what he had seen, and the more he thought, the more he grew in love. Recollecting himself, at last, after many passionate sighs, he broke out to this effect: "Ah! unhappy Titus, where and on whom hast thou fixed thy heart, thy affection, and thy whole hope? Knowest thou not, that for the favours received from Chremes and his family, as well as the close friendship betwixt thee and Gisippus, to whom she is espoused, thou oughtest to reverence her as a sister? Whom, then, dost thou love? Why suffer thyself to be thus ensnared? To what purpose that deceitful hope? Open the eyes of thy understanding, O miserable man! and know thyself. Give way to reason, curb thy inordinate appetite, moderate thy irregular desires, and direct them to a different object; subdue thy lascivious passion in the beginning, and be thy own master whilst it is in thy power. It is not convenient what thou desirest! it is not honest. What thou art in pursuit of, even wert thou sure to obtain it, as thou art not, thou

oughtest to flee from, if thou hast any regard to what true friendship and thy own duty both require. What, then, wilt thou do? To act reasonably thou must quit this love."

Then calling to mind the lady, and renouncing what he had before alleged, he said, "The laws of love are of greater force than any other; they disannul those of friendship, or even the laws divine. How often has a father loved his daughter, a brother his sister? which are much stranger things than one friend to love another friend's wife. Besides, I am young, and youth is wholly subject to the government of love. What that directs, then, I approve. Let people of more years think of what is honest: I can will nothing but to love. This her beauty commands from everyone. How am I then to blame? I love her, not because she is espoused to my friend, but I should love her to whomsoever she belonged. It is only fortune that is in fault, in having bestowed her upon him and perhaps he may be less uneasy at my admiring her, than he would be with any other person."

Thus he kept reasoning with himself backwards and forwards, not that day and night only, but many others, insomuch that he neither eat nor slept, till at last he was forced to keep his bed. Gisippus had observed him pensive for some time, and now seeing him fall sick, was extremely grieved, and sought, by all manner of means, to comfort him, pressing earnestly to know the cause of his grief. When he returned frivolous answer, far from truth, which Gisippus knew to be such; and as he was still urgent to know the real cause, Titus, compelled ^{was} it were, at length to speak, began with sighs and tears to this effect:

"O, Gisippus! if it had pleased the gods, death would have been much more welcome to me than to live any

longer, now I come to reflect that fortune has brought me into a strait, in which trial is to be made of my virtue, and I perceive that it is vanquished to my eternal reproach. But I expect ere long the proper reward, namely, death; which will be much more dear to me than to live with the consciousness of my own baseness; which, as I neither can nor ought to conceal anything from you, I now disclose with shame."

Here he related from the beginning the whole cause of his uneasiness and conflict within himself; as also which way the victory inclined; owning his extreme passion for Sophronia, and declaring, on account of the dishonourableness of it, his resolution to die, which he hoped would shortly come to pass. Gisippus, hearing this discourse, and seeing his affliction, stood some time in suspense, having a love for the lady, though in a more moderate degree: but at length his friend's life was preferred, and, sympathising with him, he wept, and said, "Titus, were it not that you stand more in need of comfort, I should upbraid you for a breach of friendship, in keeping your passion so long a secret. Admitting it to be dishonourable, yet ought it no more to be concealed than if it were otherwise, for if it be the part of a friend to rejoice at what redounds to his friend's credit, it is no less so to attempt to drive from that friend's heart what he judges contrary to it. But to leave this subject, and come to that of which you stand most in need. That you are so passionately in love with Sophronia, who is affianced to me, I am not at all surprised, but should wonder rather if it were otherwise, considering her extraordinary beauty, and the generosity of your soul, so much the more susceptible of love, in proportion to the excellency of the object. The more reason, then, there is for your loving Sophronia, the more unjustly do you complain

of fortune in having bestowed her upon me, supposing your love would have been more reputable had she belonged to any other person. But you should rather be pleased that fortune has made her mine; for an indifferent person would have given the preference to himself, which you can never suppose in me, if you hold me as much your friend as I really am. And my reason is this; I do not remember, since the commencement of our friendship, that I ever possessed anything but it was as much yours as my own; and if it was so in every other case, it shall be the same in this. It is true she is my spouse, and I have loved her most affectionately, waiting with impatience the consummation of our nuptials: but, as your desire and passion for her are the stronger, be assured that she shall be conducted into my chamber, not as my wife, but yours. Then leave these despairing thoughts, shake off that cloudy disposition, re-assume your former health and cheerful temper, and from this hour expect the reward and completion of your love, far more deserving of the lady than mine."

As much pleasure as Titus's hopes afforded him, with so much shame was he overwhelmed from this consideration, that the greater his friend's liberality, the greater disgrace it would be to accept it. Therefore, unable to refrain from tears, he thus feebly replied: "Gisippus, your sincere and generous friendship points out to me what on my part ought to be done. Heaven forbid that I should take her for mine, who was more deservedly destined to be yours: had the gods thought her a fit wife for me, they would have ordered it to have been ~~she~~. Accept thankfully, then, thy own choice and her gift, and leave me to waste away in tears as unworthy of such a blessing; for either I shall get the better of this passion, and so continue your friend, or else it will get the better

of me, and I shall then be out of my misery." Gisippus replied, "My dear friend, if our intimacy might permit me to force you in any respect to comply with my will, it is in this case that I would make use of such influence; if, then, you refuse to condescend to my entreaties, I shall, with that compulsion which is necessary for my friend's welfare, take care that Sophronia be wholly yours. I know full well the force of love, and that many of its votaries have been brought by it to an unhappy end; I see you also in such danger, that you would unavoidably sink under the burden; nor should I be long behind you. Therefore, were there no other reason, yet for my own sake would your life be dear to me. You, then, shall be possessed of her, because you will never meet with any so agreeable to yourself: but for my part I may fancy some other as well. There is no such generosity in this; women are easier found than friends; another wife I can easily procure but such a friend, perhaps, never. I can better transfer my affection to another than think of losing you. Rouse yourself, then, I entreat you, if you have any regard for me, from this affliction. Comfort at once both yourself and me, and prepare to receive the joy which your most passionate love so eagerly thirsts after."

Although Titus was ashamed to give his consent, yet love, and his friend's importunities, at length prevailed, and he replied, Gisippus, in doing what you entreat, and say is so much your desire, I know not whether I may be supposed principally to consult your pleasure or my own. As, therefore, your liberality is such that it surmounts all shame in me, I will do as you command. But remember, it is not being gratified in my love only, however great that may be; but it is receiving my life also at your hands, for which I must own myself your debtor. And may the

gods grant that I may be able, some time or other, to shew how much I think myself obliged in your manifesting a greater regard for me than I had for myself!" After this was over, Gisippus said to him, "Titus, in order that we succeed in this affair, I hold it best to take this method: you know everything is concluded between her friends and mine, and were I now to declare my refusal of her, it would be a matter of great reproach, and I should for ever disoblige both her relations and mine, though the latter I should not so much regard, could I be assured you would obtain her by that means: but I am afraid, in such case, lest they should bestow her upon some other person, and so you lose what I gain not. If you think well of it, then I intend to proceed in the affair, and bring her home as my own spouse, when you shall privately be put to bed to her, as if she was your wife, and at a proper time the thing shall be made public; if they approve of it, it will be well; if otherwise, it will be done, and cannot then be undone, for which reason they must be satisfied." Titus liked this stratagem, and as soon as he was perfectly recovered, Gisippus brought her home with great rejoicings, when the women put her into his bed, and departed. Now Titus's chamber adjoined to Gisippus's, so that a person might go out of one into the other; Gisippus, therefore, having put out the candles, went silently to Titus, and told him that he might now go to bed to his lady. Upon which Titus was so overcome with shame, that he began to repent, and refused it. But Gisippus, who was as much his friend as he had always professed himself, after a long contest, sent him to her. When being gotten into bed, he softly asked if she was willing to be his wife. She, thinking it was Gisippus, replied, "Yes." Then taking a ring of value, and putting it upon her finger, he said "And I

will be your husband." Thus everything was consummated, she thinking all the time that she had been with Gisippus. By this time Publius, the father of Titus, departed this life, when letters came to Titus, requiring him instantly to depart for Rome upon his private affairs; which he instantly resolved upon, designing also to take with him Sophronia and Gisippus; but not seeing how this could be well managed, without his first making a full discovery of what had been done, he therefore one day called her into the chamber, and told her the whole affair, which he made clear to her by many remarkable circumstances. Upon which she gazed first at one, and then the other, with a good deal of confusion, and at length burst out into tears, complaining bitterly of Gisippus's trick upon her; but before she made any stir about it in the house, she went directly to her father's; and declared to him and her mother the whole treachery, affirming that she was not the wife of Gisippus, as they imagined, but of Titus. This was a most grievous thing both to them and all her relations, who complained heavily of Gisippus and there was much disturbance and confusion about it. Great was the resentment of his own relations, as well as hers, and all declared him worthy not of reproof only but severe chastisement. But he, notwithstanding, justified what he had done, averring that thanks were rather due to him from her friends, inasmuch as he had married her to one better than himself. Titus, on the other part beheld all this with great concern, and knowing it to be the temper of the Greeks to make a mighty noise and stir when no opposition is made, but where there is any resistance, then to be tame and submissive, he resolved to bear their reproaches no longer without a reply; and having an Attic genius, with a true Roman spirit, he had all Gisippus's and Sophronia's friends summoned together into a temple

and coming thither, accompanied only by Gisippus, he addressed himself to the expecting multitude in the following manner:—

“It is the opinion of many philosophers that we mortals do nothing but what is pre-ordained by the immortal gods, from whence some conclude that our actions are determined by a fatal necessity, though others refer that necessity to things already past. Whoever has regard to either of these tenets, must allow that to find fault with what cannot be revoked, is, in other terms, to quarrel with Providence, whom we should believe to govern by perpetual laws, not subject to error, both us and all our affairs; and yet you yourselves are the people that presume to do this, if it be true what I hear that you are continually exclaiming against my marriage with Sophronia, whom you had given to Gisippus, never considering that it was decreed from the beginning that she should not be his wife, but mine, as the effect now proves. However, as discoursing upon the secrets of Providence is too knotty and intricate a subject for most people to comprehend, I am willing to suppose that no regard is had to what is done here below, and shall confine myself altogether to the dictates of human reason. Speaking, therefore, in that manner, I am forced to do two things contrary to my natural temper: to commend myself, and to blame or lessen other people. But as I shall keep strictly to the truth in both respects and the nature of the case requires me to do both, I therefore proceed. Your complaints arise more from rage than reason; you are continually reviling Gisippus, because he generously parted with a lady whom you designed to be his wife. This action, nevertheless, deserves the highest commendation, and that for two reasons. First, because he has thereby performed a most noble act of friendship; and secondly

he has acted more wisely than yourselves would have done. How far the sacred bonds of friendship oblige one friend to go for another, I shall not at present examine, but content myself barely with reminding you, that they are much stronger than the ties of blood. Our friends are our own choice, but our relations we receive from the hands of fortune. If, therefore, Gisippus, who is my friend, valued my life beyond your favour, you need not be surprised. But secondly, I will shew, by divers instances, seeing that you know little of Providence, and much less of the effects of friendship, that he has proved himself wiser than you all. You gave Sophronia to him, being a young gentleman and a philosopher; he bestowed her on a young gentleman and a philosopher also. You gave her to an Athenian; he conferred her upon a Roman. You gave her to one of a good family; he to a person of a better. You to one that was rich; he to another much richer. You to one who but little esteemed, and scarcely knew her; he to one that loved her as his own life. Consider, then, what I have said, article by article. We are of equal years, and our studies have been the same; he, indeed, is an Athenian, and I a Roman, but no one can pretend to put those two cities in competition. Rome is an independent, free city; Athens, a tributary one. Rome is mistress of the whole world; whilst Athens is under her subjection. Rome is justly famed for arms, extent of empire, and all sorts of polite earning whils Athens is only remarkable for a little philosophy. And though you see me here a scholar, and of no great account, yet I am not descended from the dregs of the people. My houses and the public places are filled with the statues of my ancestors, and our annals record the numberless triumphs of the Quintii brought home by them into the Roman Capitol. Nor has time itself tarnished our glory.

but the lustre of our house continues the same as ever. I say nothing of my wealth, out of mere shame, remembering that a virtuous poverty was the noblest patrimony of the ancient Roman: but if you be of a different opinion, and think with the ignorant multitude there is any real excellence in riches, I can then tell you that I am abundantly provided, not from my own covetous desires, but the gift of fortune. I know very well that you desired his alliance, as he is of your own city: but why should not I be as much esteemed by you at Rome, considering that you will then have a faithful friend and advocate in all your affairs, both public and private? Upon all these accounts I must conclude that Gisippus has judged more wisely than yourselves. Sophronia is married to a noble and wealthy citizen of Rome, one of ancient family, and a friend of Gisippus; therefore, whoever makes any complaint or stir about it, neither does as he ought, nor yet knows what he does. But some, perhaps, may say, "We do not so much blame the thing, as the manner in which it was done, she being made his wife, as it were, by stealth." Why, this is no such strange matter! How many examples are there of this kind in the world? Do not daughters marry without their parents' consent? Some go into foreign countries with their gallants and others never discover their marriages at all, till their appearance or lying-in does it for them. Now there is nothing like this in Sophronia's case; she was decently and honourably disposed of by Gisippus to me. Others may allege that she was married to a person for whom she was never designed; but those complaints are now very foolish and to no purpose. Fortune makes use of strange methods sometimes to bring things to pass. What is it to me, whether it be a cobbler or a philosopher that does any business of mine or whether it be in public or private,

provided the end be good? Indeed, if I find the cobbler indiscreet in his management, he shall have no more to do for me, but still I am obliged to thank him when he does me any real service. Gisippus has married Sophronia; well, then to what purpose is it how he did it? If you question his prudence let him have no more of your daughters to dispose of; but still thank him for providing so well for this. I never meant to throw a stain upon your family, in the person of Sophronia; and though I married her in that manner, I neither came as a ravisher, nor one refusing your alliance; I was charmed with her beauty and virtue; and fearing if I proceeded in the usual way, that you would never give your consent, on account of my taking her away to Rome, I therefore had recourse to this artifice, and made Gisippus espouse her for me. Moreover, though I loved her most immoderately, yet, to shew that my designs were strictly honourable, I first espoused her with my own ring, as she can bear me witness, asking her whether she was willing to take me for her husband, when she made answer that she was; if she was deceived, she herself is to blame for not asking me who I was. This, then, is the mighty crime committed by him as a friend, and me as a lover: for this you lay snares for, and threaten his life. What could you do more, had he given her to the veriest scoundrel in the universe? But letting this alone for the present, the time is now come, on account of my father's unexpected death, for my returning to Rome; and, intending to make Sophronia along with me, I have thought it proper to declare what might otherwise have been kept secret; if you be wise, you will take it in good part, for were I capable of such an action, I might basely have left her. But Heaven forbid that such a thought should ever enter the breast of a Roman! Sophronia, therefore, is mine, by the will

of Heaven, the laws of men, the generosity of my friend, and the innocent artifice wherewith love inspired me; whilst you, thinking yourselves wiser than other people, or even the gods themselves, contest this my title two ways, both very injurious to me: first by detaining Sophronia, over whom you have no more power than what I please to give you; and, secondly, by your ill treatment of my friend, to whom yourselves are greatly obliged. How indiscreet you are in both cases I shall not say at present, but only advise you amicably to give up your resentment, and deliver Sophronia to me, that I may depart your friend, and continue so; assuring you, whether you be pleased or otherwise with what is done, that, if you offer to proceed in a different manner, I will then take Gisippus along with me; and when I come to Rome, fetch her, who is mine by right, in spite of you all, from amongst you, making you sensible, at the same time, what it is to incur the just displeasure of the Romans."

After Titus had done speaking, he took Gisippus by the hand, and went out with him, knitting his brows, and shewing all the marks of passion at those within the temple; whilst they, moved partly with the reasons he had given, and partly terrified with his last words, thought it better to admit him as a relation, since Gisippus had refused it, than to lose the alliance of one, and procure the enmity of the other. So they went with one accord, and told him that they consented he should have Sophronia, and should esteem him as their kinsman, and Gisippus as their friend. Thus they made a solemn agreement together, and departed, delivering Sophronia up to him; who, being wise enough to make a virtue of necessity, the love which she had borne to Gisippus she immediately transferred to Titus, and went with him to Rome, where she was received with great honour and respect.

Gisippus continued at Athens in little esteem with the people; and powerful parties were formed against him, insomuch that he was at length driven from the place, and doomed, with all his family, to perpetual banishment. Being thus destitute of all friends, and no better than a common beggar, he travelled, as well as he could, for Rome, to see if Titus would take any notice of him. When, finding that he was alive, and in great favour with the people, he inquired for his house, and went thither, waiting till he should come past.

Not daring to speak a word, on account of his poverty, he yet put himself in his way, in hopes that he would recollect and challenge him; but he passed by, and Gisippus imagining that he had seen and despised him, and calling to mind what he had formerly done for him, he went away confounded with grief and despair. It was now night, and he had been fasting all that day, and being without a penny of money in his pocket, and desiring nothing so much as to die, he rambled, without knowing whither, till he came to a solitary part of the city, where he found a great cavern, and went into it, with a design of staying all night, when, laying himself down almost naked upon the hard ground, he wept himself asleep. To this place two thieves who had been robbing all night, came with their booty towards break of day, and, quarrelling together about it, one killed the other, and departed. This Gisippus perceiving, and thinking he had now found a way to die, without laying hands upon himself, he stayed there till the officers, who had notice of the murder, came and hurried him violently away. Upon examination, he confessed that he had committed the fact, and had not the power afterwards to stir from the place.

On this, Marcus Varro, who was the praetor, gave

sentence that he should be crucified, as was the usual manner of death in those cases. Now it happened, by great chance, that Titus came into the hall at the very time, and looking attentively in the prisoner's face, and hearing the cause of his condemnation, he instantly knew him to be Gisippus. He wondered, therefore, greatly at this change of fortune, and what could bring him thither; and was determined, at all events, to save him; but seeing no other way but by accusing himself, he stepped resolutely forwards, and called aloud to the praetor in this manner: "Marcus Varro, recall thy sentence; for the person whom thou hast condemned is innocent: it was I who offended the gods, by the murder of that man whom the officers found slain this morning: then do not offend them still more by the murder of another innocent person." Varro was quite astonished, and grieved to that degree, that the whole hall heard him; but not being able, with regard to his own honour, to alter the course of the laws, he ordered Gisippus to come back, when he said, in the presence of Titus, "How couldst thou be so foolish to confess, without any torture, a crime whereof thou art no way guilty, and which would affect thy life? Thou saidst that thou wert the person that slew the man, and now here is another come, who says it was not thou, but he, that did it."

Gisippus lifted up his eyes, and saw that it was Titus when, concluding that this was done out of a grateful remembrance of the favours he had received, he fell into tears, and said, "Indeed, sir, I did murder him, and Titus's regard for my safety comes now too late." Titus, on the other part, said, "Marcus Verro, take notice, this man is a stranger, and was found, without any arms, by the man's side that was murdered; it is only his poverty that makes him desirous of dying; then set him at liberty,

and punish me, who have deserved it." Varro was greatly astonished at the pressing instances of both, presuming that neither one nor the other was guilty; and as he was thinking of a method how they might both be acquitted, behold, a young fellow, named Publius Ambustus, one of a notorious character, and who had actually done the thing, had the humanity, seeing each accusing himself, to come before the praetor, and say, "Sir, the Fates have forced me hither to solve this difficulty. Some god or power within me spurs me on to make a confession of my own guilt. Know, therefore, that neither of these people was any way accessory, who are impeaching themselves: I murdered the man early this morning, and this poor wretch was there asleep, whilst I and the man who is killed were dividing our spoil. As for Titus, there is no occasion for my vindicating him; his character is without reproach. Set them both, then, at liberty, and let me suffer what the laws require."

This affair was soon told to Octavius Cæsar, who, being desirous of knowing why they wanted so much to suffer, had all three brought before him, when each related fully how the thing really was. Upon which he set the two friends at liberty, because they were innocent, and pardoned the third also for their sakes. Titus then took his friend Gisippus, and, after reprobating him for his distrust and cool credence of his friendship, brought him to his own house, when Sophronia received him with the same affection as if he had been her brother; and giving him clothes suitable to his worth and quality, he afterwards divided his whole substance with him, and bestowed a sister of his, named Fulvia, an agreeable young lady, upon him in marriage; saying further to him. "Gisippus, you have your free choice, whether to stay with me, or to go, with what I have given you into

Greece;" but he, moved partly by his exile, and partly by his love and friendship for Titus, agreed to stay at Rome, where they all lived together in one house, he with his Fulvia, and Titus with his fair Sophronia, to their mutual satisfaction, every day adding something, if possible, to their felicity. A most sacred thing, therefore, is friendship! and worthy not only of singular reverence, but to be celebrated with perpetual applause, as being the prudent mother of magnificence and honesty, the sister of gratitude and charity, and the enemy of hatred and avarice; always ready, without being requested, to manifest that virtuous kindness to others which she would have shewed to herself; whose divine effects are rarely now to be met with, to the great reproach of the sordidness of mankind, which has driven it in a long exile to the farthest corner of the earth. What degree of love, wealth, or affinity, could have wrought so effectually upon the heart of Gisippus, to make him feel the pangs of his friends, and give him up to his beloved spouse? What laws, what threats, or fears, could cause the youth and vigour of Gisippus to forsake his own bed, where a beautiful young lady lay expecting him, and betake himself to dark and lonesome places? What greatness, what rewards, could make him heedless of disobliging all his own relations, as well as Sophronia's, despising the unjust murmurs and insults of the people, to serve his friend? What, I say, but this only? On the other part, what could prompt Titus, without deliberation, when he might have fairly pretended not to have seen him, to contrive his own death, in order to save Gisippus? What made him so liberal in parting with half his substance, Gisippus whom fortune had dispossessed of his own patrimony? What induced Titus, when he saw him poor and destitute, to give him his sister, but only this? To what

purpose, then, do men covet numbers of relations, brethren, and children, and procure, at a vast expense, great plenty of servants, when, for the least inconvenience that they may sustain, people are apt to forget their duty to parent, brother, or master? Whereas, in true friendship it is quite otherwise, that sacred obligation serves instead of all degrees of affinity.

NOVEL IX

Saladin, disguising himself like a merchant, is generously entertained by Signor Torello; who going upon an expedition to the Holy Land, allowed his wife a certain time to marry again. In the meantime he is taken prisoner, and being employed to look after the hawks, is known to the Soldan, who shews him great respect. Afterwards Torello falls sick, and is conveyed, by magic art, in one night, to Pavia, at the very time that his wife was to have been married: when he makes himself known to her, and returns with her home.

PHILOMENA had now concluded her story, and Titus's gratitude was much applauded; when the king began in this manner:—

Most certainly, ladies, Philomena is in the right as to what she has said upon friendship; and it was with reason she complained, last of all, of its being in such little esteem with mankind: and, had we met here to correct or reprove the vices of the age, I could proceed in a loose harangue to the same purpose; but, as that is foreign to our design, I intend to relate, in a long, but pleasant novel, one, out of the many generous actions of Saladin; to the end, that if, through our imperfections, we cannot attain the friendship of anyone, we should yet make it a pleasure to oblige, in hopes that a reward may ensue some time or other.

I say, therefore, that, in the reign of the Emperor Frederick the first, a general crusade was undertaken by

all the Christian princes, for the recovery of the Holy Land; which design of theirs coming first to the ears of Saladin, a most renowned prince, then Soldan of Babylon, he resolved to go in person to see what preparations were making against him, in order to provide the better for his own defence. So, settling all his affairs in Egypt, and taking with him two of his most sage and principal nobles, and three servants only, he set forwards, in the habit of a merchant, as if he was going on a pilgrimage. After travelling over many Christian countries, and riding through Lombardy, in order to pass the mountains, it happened, towards the evening, that, between Pavia and Milan, he met with a gentleman, named Torello d' Istria, who was going with his hawks, hounds, and servants, to a country-house that he had on the river Tesino. Torello, upon seeing them, supposed that they were strangers of some quality, and as such was desirous of shewing them respect. Therefore, Saladin having asked one of the servants how far it was to Pavia, and if they could get there time enough to be admitted, Torello would not let the servant reply, but answered himself, "Gentlemen, it is impossible for you to reach Pavia now before the gates are shut." "Then," quoth Saladin, "please to inform us, as we are strangers, where we may meet with the best entertainment." Torello replied, "That I will do with all my heart; I was just going to send one of my fellows to a place near Pavia, upon some particular business; he shall go with you, and bring you to a place where you will be accommodated well enough." So taking one of the most discreet of his men aside, and having told him what he should do, he sent him along with them, whilst he made the best of his way to his own house, where he had as elegant a supper provided for them as could be supposed for the time, and the tables.

all spread in the garden; which when he had done he went to the door to wait for his guests. The servant rode chatting along with them, leading them by other round-about ways, till at last, without their perceiving it, he brought them to his master's house. As soon as Torello saw them, he advanced pleasantly, saying, "Gentlemen, you are heartily welcome." Saladin, who was a very shrewd person, perceived that the knight was doubtful whether they would have accepted his invitation, had he asked them to go with him home, and that he had contrived this stratagem not to be denied the pleasure of entertaining them. So he returned his compliment, and said, "If it was possible for one person to complain of another's courtesy, we should have cause to blame yours, which, not to mention the hindrance of our journey, compelled us, without deserving your notice otherwise than by a casual salutation to accept of such great favours as these." Torello, being both wise and eloquent, replied, "Gentlemen, it is poor respect you receive from me, compared to what you deserve, so far as I can judge by your countenances; but in truth there was no convenient place out of Pavia that you could possibly lie at; then pray take it not amiss that you have stepped a little out of your way, to be something less incommoded."

Having said this, the servants were all at hand to take their horses, when they alighted, and were shewn into rooms prepared for them; where they had their boots pulled off, and were refreshed with a glass of wine; falling into agreeable discourse together afterwards till supper-time.

Now Saladin and his people all spoke Latin extremely well, so that they were easily understood by each other, and Torello seemed, in their judgment, to be the most

gracious, accomplished gentleman, and one that talked the best, of any they had ever met with. On the other part, Torello judged them to be people of great rank and figure, and much beyond what he at first apprehended; for which reason he was extremely concerned that he could not then have an entertainment and guests suitable. But for this he resolved to make amends the following day; and having instructed one of his servants what he would have done, he sent him to Pavia, which was near at hand, and by a way where no gate was locked, to his wife, who was a lady of great sense and magnanimity.

Afterwards, taking his guests into the garden, he courteously demanded of them who they were. Saladin replied, "We are merchants from Cyprus, and are going upon our affairs to Paris." "Would to Heaven, then," said Torello, "that our country produced such gentry as I see Cyprus does merchants!" So they fell from one discourse to another till the hour for supping, when they seated themselves just as they pleased, and a supper, entirely unexpected, was served up with great elegance and order. In some little time, after the tables were removed, Torello, supposing they might be weary, had them conducted to their chambers, where most sumptuous beds were prepared for them, and he in like manner went to take his rest.

The servant that was sent to Pavia delivered his message to the lady; who, not with a feminine disposition, but a soul truly loyal, got together great numbers of the friends and servants of Torello, and had everything provided to make a feast indeed, sending through the city by torchlight to invite most of the nobility, and setting forth all the rooms with rich furniture of cloth of gold, fine tapestry, velvets, &c., according to his directions.

In the morning the gentlemen arose, and mounted their horses along with Torello, who ordered out his hawks, and carried them to a neighbouring lake, where he shewed two or three fair flights. But Saladin requesting somebody to direct him to the best inn in Pavia, Torello said, "That I will do, because I have business there." So they were satisfied, and rode on along with him, arriving there about the third hour of the day. And whilst they supposed that he would carry them to the best inn, he brought them directly to his own house, where were about fifty of the principal persons of the city ready to receive them. Saladin and his friends perceiving this, readily guessed how the matter was, and they said, "Sir, this is not what we desired; you did enough for us last night, and more than we could have wished; you might now, therefore, very well let us pursue our journey." He made answer, "Gentlemen, last night I was obliged to fortune, which surprised you upon the road in such manner that you were necessitated to take up with my little mansion; but now I shall be indebted to you, and these noble persons all around equally with me, if, out of your great courtesy, you will not refuse the favour of dining with me." Thus they were prevailed upon, and they alighted from their horses, when they were welcomed by the company with great joy and respect, and conducted into several apartments most richly set out for their reception, where, laying aside their riding dresses, and taking some refreshment, they then made their appearance in the grand hall. After washing their hands they sat down all in order, when such a prodigious entertainment was served up, that if the emperor himself had been present, he could not have been more sumptuously regaled. Even Saladin and his friends, who were people of figure, and accustomed to everything of grandeur,

could not help being astonished, having regard to the rank of the person, whom they knew to be only a private gentleman.

When dinner was over, and they had discoursed a little together, the Pavian gentry, the weather being extremely hot, all withdrew to repose themselves; and Torello, being left with his three guests, shewed them into a drawing-room, where, that nothing which he valued might be left unseen by them, he sent for his lady. She, therefore, being a person of extraordinary beauty, and most sumptuously attired, was speedily introduced between her two little sons, who seemed like angels, when she very modestly and genteelly saluted them. At her coming, they arose, and received her with great deference and respect, seating her down by them, and taking great notice of the children. In a little time, after some discourse together, and Torello was gone out of the room, she, in a modest and graceful manner, began to inquire of them whence they came, and whither they were going. To which they returned the same answer they had done to Torello. "Then," said she, very pleasantly, "I see, gentlemen, that my poor design may be acceptable, I beg, then, as a particular favour, that you will not think lightly of a very small present which I mean to offer you; but, considering that women give little things, according to their slender abilities, that you would accept it, more out of respect to the good intention of the donor, than the real value of the present." So she ordered two robes to be brought for each, the one lined with Taffeta, and the other with fur, not so much becoming a citizen or a merchant as a great lord; and three doublets of sarsenet, with the same of linen, saying, "Gentlemen, pray accept of these things: I clothe you as I do my husband; and, for the rest, considering that you are a great way from

your wives, that you have come a long journey, and have far yet to go, they may be of service, though of small value; especially as you merchants love always to be genteel and neat." They were greatly surprised, seeing plainly that Signor Torello would let no part of his respect be wanting; doubting likewise, when they came to see the richness of the presents, whether they were not discovered. But at length one of them said, "Madam, these are very great things, and such as we ought not to accept, unless you force them upon us; in which case we must comply." Her husband now returned, when she took her leave, and went and made suitable presents to their servants. Torello, with much entreaty, prevailed upon them to stay all that day; therefore, after taking a little sleep, they put on those robes, and took a ride with him round the city, and at their return were nobly entertained with a great deal of good company at supper. At due time they went to bed, and when they arose in the morning instead of their wearied steeds they found ~~three~~ strong, handsome, fresh ones, with new serviceable horses also for their servants; which when Saladin saw, he turned to his friends, and said: "I vow to Heaven, a more complete, courteous, or a more understanding gentleman I never met with anywhere; and if the Christian kings be in degree like to him, the soldan of Babylon would never be able to stand against one, much less so many as are now preparing to invade us." Knowing well that it would be in vain to refuse them, after returning all due thanks, he and his attendants got on horseback, whilst Torello, with a great number of his friends, went with them a considerable distance from the city: and, though Saladin was grieved to separate, such was the regard he had conceived for him, yet, being constrained to depart, he begged he would return. He, yet loath to leave them, replied,

“Gentlemen, I will do so, as it is your desire; but this I must tell you, I know not who you are, nor do I seek to be informed any farther than you desire I should; but, be you who you will, you shall never make me believe that you are merchants, and so I commend you to Providence.”—Saladin then took leave of all the company; and to Torello he said, “Sir, we may chance to shew you some of our merchandise, and so convince you; but, in the meantime, fare you well.” Thus Saladin departed, and his companions, with a firm resolution in case he lived, and the approaching war did not prevent it, to show no less respect and honour to Signor Torello than he had received from him: and talking much of him, his lady, and everything that he had said and done, he commended all to the greatest degree imaginable.—At length, after he had travelled over the west, not without great labour and fatigue, he embarked on board a ship for Alexandria, and being fully informed as to every particular, he prepared for a vigorous defence. Signor Torello returned to Pavia, full of conjectures who these three people should be, in which, however, he was far from the truth. But the time now drawing night for the march of the forces, and great preparations being made everywhere, Torello, notwithstanding the prayers and tears of his lady, resolved to go; and having everything in readiness, and being about to mount his horse, he said to her, whom he loved most affectionately, “My dear, you see I am going upon this expedition, as well for the glory of my body as the safety of my soul; I commend my honour and everything else to your care; and, as my departure is certain, but my return, by reason of a thousand accidents which may happen, uncertain, I request, therefore, this one favour, that, happen what will to me, if you have no certain account of my being

alive, you 'would only wait a year, a month, and a day, without marrying again, reckoning from the day of my leaving you.' " The lady, who wept exceedingly, thus replied, "My dear husband, I know not how I shall be able to bear grief in which you leave me involved for you going from me: but, if I should outlive it, and anything happen amiss to you, you may live and die assured that I shall live and die the wife of Torello, and of his memory." He then said, "I make not the least doubt but that what you promise will be performed, as far as lies in your power; but you are young, beautiful and well descended, and your virtues so universally known, that I am afraid, should there be the least suspicion of my death, lest many great lords and noble personages should come, and demand you of your brethren and other relations, from whose most urgent solicitations you could never defend yourself, however you might be disposed and so you be compelled to give way. It is then for this reason that I would tie you down to that time, and no moment longer." The lady said, "I will do all in my power with regard to my promise; but should I ever think of acting otherwise, yet your injunction I will steadily abide by. Heaven grant, however, that I see you long before that time!" Here she embraced him, shedding abundance of tears, and taking a ring from her finger gave it him, and said, "If I should chance to die before your return, remember me always when you look upon this." He received it and bidding everyone farewell mounted his horse and rode away, with a handsome retinue, for Genoa, where they all embarked, and soon arrived at Acre, when they joined the Christian army which was visited by a mortal pestilence, that swept away a great part of the people; and the thin remains of it were by the dexterity or good fortune of Saladin, taken prisoner

almost to a man, and distributed into divers cities to be imprisoned; when it was Torello's fortune to be sent to Alexandria; where, being unknown, and fearing lest he should be discovered, he was driven by necessity to undertake the care of hawks, of which he was a great master. By that means he soon fell under the notice of Saladin, who set him at liberty, and made him his falconer. Torello, who went by no other name than that of the Christian, and neither remembered the soldan, nor the soldan him, had all his thoughts at Pavia, and was often contriving how to make his escape, though without success. But some ambassadors from Genoa being come thither, to treat with the soldan about the redemption of certain of their countrymen, as they were just upon their departure, he resolved to write to his lady, to let her know he was alive, and would make all possible haste home, praying her, therefore, to be in daily expectation of his coming; and so he did. He earnestly entreated also one of the ambassadors, whom he knew, that he would take care those letters came to the hands of the abbot of San Pietro, who was his uncle. Whilst Torello remained in this condition, it happened one day, as Saladin was talking with him about his hawks, that he chanced to laugh, when he made a certain motion with his lips, which Saladin, when he was at his house in Pavia, had taken particular notice of. Upon which he recollected him, and looking steadfastly at him, believed he was the same person. Now leaving his former discourse, he said, "Tell me, Christian, of what country in the west art thou?"—"My lord," replied, he, "I am a Lombard, and born in a city called Pavia; but am a poor man, and of no account." When Saladin heard that, he became assured of what he doubted before, saying joyfully to himself: "Providence has now given me an opportunity of shewing how acceptable his

generosity was to me." So causing his wardrobe to be set open, he carried him thither, and said, "Take notice, Christian, if there is any one robe amongst these that thou hast seen before." Torello soon cast his eye upon that which his lady had given to Saladin, but not imagining it could be the same, he replied, "My lord, I know not one; two there are, indeed, which are like what I have worn formerly, and which I gave to three merchants that were at my house." Now Saladin could contain no longer, but taking him joyfully in his arms, he said, "You are Signor Torello d' Istria, and I am one of the three merchants to whom your lady gave these robes: and now the time is come for me to convince you what my merchandise is, as I said at my leaving you might possibly happen." Torello, at hearing these words, was overwhelmed both with joy and shame; joy in having had such a guest, and shame to think how indifferently he had received him. When Saladin said, "Torello, as Providence hath sent you hither, account yourself to be master, and not me." So, after great expressions of joy, he clothed him in royal apparel, and having recommended him to all his principal barons, and spoken highly in his praise, he commanded them to shew him the same respect and honour as they would himself, if they expected any favour at his hands; which accordingly they all observed, especially the two lords who had accompanied Saladin to his house.

The great pitch of grandeur and glory to which Torello saw himself so suddenly advanced, had made him forgetful of his affairs in Lombardy, especially as he was in hopes that his letters had been conveyed safely to his uncle. Now there was amongst the Christians, on the day they were surprised by Saladin, a gentleman of small esteem, dead and buried, called Torello di Dignes;

consequently, as Torello d' Istria was universally known through the whole army, on account of his nobility, who ever heard that Torello was dead concluded it was he of Istria, and not of Dignes: and they being all taken prisoners immediately upon it, prevented people being undeceived, so that many Italians returned home with the news, and some were daring enough to affirm that they had seen him dead, and were present at his interment. This occasioned great grief both to his wife and relations, as also to every one that knew him. It would be tedious to shew the lady's trouble and affliction, who, after wearing out some months in mourning, and beginning now to be a little comforted, was much pressed by her brethren and relations, seeing she was courted by divers great lords of Lombardy, to marry again. She several times, with tears, withstood their solicitations, till, being over-importuned, she consented at last, provided they would let her wait the time prescribed by Torello.

Things proceeding thus at Pavia, and there wanting only eight days for her taking a second husband, it happened one day that Torello met with one of the people whom he had seen go on board with the Genoese ambassadors, and inquired of him what sort of a voyage they had, and when they arrived at Genoa. The other replied, "Sir, they had a very bad one, as we understood at Crete, whither I was bound; for, as they came near to Sicily a strong north wind arose, which drove them upon the sands of Barbary, so that every soul of them perished and amongst the rest two of my brethren were lost." Torello gave credit to this account, which indeed was very true, and calling to mind that the limited time was near expiring; supposing likewise that no tidings had come to Pavia concerning him, he took it for granted that she would be married again, and laid it so much to

heart that he began to loathe his victuals, and was brought to death's door; which, when Saladin understood, who had a great affection for him, he came to visit him, and learning after great importunity the cause of his disorder, he reproved him for not acquainting him with it sooner, desiring him nevertheless to be easy, and promising that he should be at Pavia within the time, and he told him in what manner. Torello gave credit to these words, hearing it was possible, and had been often done, and he began to take heart, and to press Saladin about it; who, therefore, had recourse to a necromancer, whose skill he had made trial of, desiring he would convey Torello upon a bed to Pavia in one night's time. The necromancer promised it should be done, but said it would be convenient for him to be thrown into a sleep. This was concerted, whilst Saladin returned to Torello, and found him bent upon being at Pavia, if possible, within the time, otherwise wishing to die; when he said to him, "Torello, if you have that prodigious value for your lady, and are in such concern lest she should be given away to another, Heaven knows my heart, I can in no way blame you for it; because, of all the women I ever saw, her address and behaviour, setting beauty aside, which is only a fading flower, are most to be commended and esteemed. I should have been glad, as fortune has sent you hither, that what time we have to live we might have reigned together in these our kingdoms. But as I am not likely to have this favour, and you seem resolved to go to Pavia in due time, or else to die, I could greatly have wished to have known it early enough, that I might have sent you home with that state and equipage which your virtue justly requires. But as this did not happen, and you are desirous of being instantly there, I will take care you shall be conveyed in the manner I related to you." Torello then

replied, "My lord, the effects, without words, have sufficiently made manifest your disposition towards me, and which, in that supreme degree, is far beyond my deserts; and what you say, living or dying, I shall most assuredly rely upon you. As that then, is my desire, I beg it may be done immediately, for to-morrow is the last day of my being expected."—This Saladin promised, and resolving to send him away the following night, he had a most beautiful and rich bed put up in his grand hall, made of fine velvet and cloth of gold, according to their custom, over which was a most curious counterpoint wrought in certain figures, with the largest pearls and other precious stones, supposed to be of an immense value, with two noble pillows, suitable to such a bed. When this was done, he ordered Torello to be clothed after Saracen manner, with the richest and most beautiful robes that were ever seen, and a large turban folded upon his head; and, it now growing late, he went with divers of his nobles to the chamber where Torello was; when sitting down by him, he began to weep, and say, "Torello, the hour is now at hand which must divide us; and, as I can neither attend you myself, nor cause you to be attended, through the nature of the journey you have to go, which will not admit of it, I must, therefore, take leave of you in your chamber, for which purpose I am now come hither. First, then, I commend you to God's providence, begging you, by the love and friendship existing between us, to be mindful of me always, and, if it be possible, before we finish our lives, that you would settle your affairs in Lombardy; and come once more at least to see me, in order to make some amends for the pleasure which your hasty departure now deprives me of: and, till this shall happen, do not think much to visit me by letters, asking whatever favours you please from me, being assured there

is no person living whom I would so readily oblige as yourself." Torello could not refrain from tears, and answered, as well as he could for weeping, in a few words, that it was impossible the favours he had received should ever be forgotten by him, and that, at a proper time, he would not fail to do what he desired. Saladin then embraced him, and saying, "God be with you!" departed out of the chamber, weeping: the nobles also took their leave, and went with Saladin into the great hall, where the bed was provided. But it now waxing late, and the necromancer desiring dispatch, a physician came with a certain draught, and telling him that it was to fortify his spirits, he made him drink it off, when he was immediately cast into a profound sleep. He was then, by Saladin's order, laid upon that magnificent bed, on which was set a most beautiful crown, of prodigious value, written upon in such a manner, as to shew that it was designed by Saladin as a present to Torello's lady. On his finger he put a ring, wherein was a carbuncle, that appeared like a flaming torch, the value of which was not to be estimated. To his side was a sword girt with such ornaments, that the like was scarcely ever seen. About his neck was a kind of solitaire, not to be equalled for the value of the pearls, and other precious stones, with which it was embellished. And lastly, on each side were two great basins of gold, full of double ducats, with many strings of pearl, rings, girdles, and other things too tedious to mention, which were laid all round him. When this was done, he kissed Torello once more, as he lay upon his bed, commanding the necromancer then to use all possible expedition. Instantly the bed, with Torello upon it, was carried away in presence of them all, leaving them in discourse about it, and set in the church of San Pietro di Pavia, according to his own request, where he

was found by the sacrist, fast asleep, with all these jewels and other ornaments, in the morning when it rung to matins; who, coming into the church with a light in his hand, and seeing that rich bed, was frightened out of his wits, and ran out. When the abbot and monks saw him in this confusion, they were greatly surprised, and inquired the reason, which the monk told them. "How!" quoth the abbot, "thou art no child or stranger here, to be so easily terrified; let us go and see this bug-bear." They then took more lights, and went altogether into the church, where they saw this wonderful rich bed, and the knight lying upon it fast asleep. And as they stood gazing at a distance, and fearful of taking a nearer view, it happened, the virtue of the draught being gone, that Torello awoke, and fetched a deep sigh; at which the monks and abbot cried out, "Lord, have mercy upon us!" and away they ran. Torello now opened his eyes, and looking all around him, saw he was where he had desired Saladin to have him conveyed, at which he was extremely satisfied; so raising himself up, and beholding the treasure he had with him, whatever Saladin's generosity seemed to him before, he now thought it greater than ever, as having had more knowledge of it. Nevertheless, without stirring from the place, seeing the monks all run away in that manner, and imagining the reason, he began to call the abbot by name, and to beg of him to entertain no doubts in the affair, for that he was Torello, his nephew. —The abbot at hearing this, was still more afraid, as he supposed him dead many months before; till being assured, by good and sufficient reasons, and hearing himself again called upon, he made the sign of the cross, and went to him. When Torello said, "Father, what are you in doubt about? I am alive, God be thanked, and now returned from beyond sea." The abbot, notwithstanding

he had a great beard, and was dressed after the Turkish fashion, soon remembered him; and assuming some courage, he took him by the hand, and said, "Son, you are welcome home." And he added, "You need not be surprised at my fear, for there was nobody here but was fully persuaded of your death, insomuch that, I must tell you, your lady, Madam Adalieta, overpowered by the prayers and threats of her friends, is now married again, contrary to her own will, and this morning she is to go home to her new husband, and everything is prepared for solemnizing the nuptials."

Torello now arose, and saluted the abbot and all the monks, begging of them to say nothing of his return, till he had dispatched a certain affair. Afterwards, having carried all the jewels and wealth into a place of safety, he related all that had passed to the abbot, who was extremely rejoiced. He then desired to know who that second husband was, and the abbot informed him; when he replied, "I should be glad before she knows of my return, to see how she relishes this wedding; therefore, though it be unusual for the clergy to go to such entertainments, yet, for my sake, I wish you would contrive so that we may be both there." The abbot answered that he would with all his heart. When it was daylight, he sent to the bridegroom to let him know, that he and a friend would come together to his wedding. The bridegroom replied, that he should be obliged to them for the favour. And when dinner-time came, Torello, in the same habit in which he arrived, went along with the abbot to the bridegroom's house, where he was wonderfully gazed at, though known by nobody; the abbot giving out that he was going as an ambassador from the soldan to the King of France. Torello then was seated at a table opposite to his wife, whom he beheld with a great pleasure,

and thought he saw uneasiness in her looks at these nuptials. She would likewise give a look sometimes towards him, not out of any remembrance she had of him, for that was quite taken away by his great beard, strange dress, and full persuasion that he was dead. At last, when he thought it a fit time to try if she would remember him, he took the ring in his hand which she had given him at his departure, and calling one of the young men that was in waiting, he said, "Tell the bride, from me, that it is a custom in our country, when any stranger as I may be, is at such an entertainment as this, for the bride, in token of his being welcome, to send the cup in which she herself drinks, full of wine; when after the stranger has drunk what he pleases and covered the cup, the bride then pledges him with the rest." The youth delivered the message to the lady, who, thinking him to be some great personage, to let him see his company was agreeable, ordered a large golden cup, which she had before her, to be washed, and filled with wine, and to be carried to him. Torello, having put the ring into his mouth, contrived to let it fall into the cup, without any one's perceiving it; and leaving but little wine therein, he covered it up and sent it to the lady, who received it; and, in compliance with the custom, uncovered and put it to her mouth, when she saw the ring; and, considering it a while, and knowing it to be the same she had given her husband, she took it and began to look attentively at the supposed stranger; when, calling him to mind, like a distracted person, she threw all the tables down before her, crying out, "This is my lord! This is truly Torello!" Then running to the table where he was sitting, without having regard to anything that was on it, she cast that down likewise, and clasped her arms about him in such a manner, as if she would never separate from him more.

At last, the company being in some confusion, though for the most part pleased with the return of so worthy a knight; Torello, after requesting silence, gave them a full account of what had befallen him to that hour; concluding, that he hoped the gentleman who had married his wife, supposing he was dead, would not be disengaged, seeing he was alive, that he took her back again. The bridegroom, though he was not a little disappointed, replied freely, and as a friend, that no doubt he might do what he pleased with his own. She consequently gave up the ring and crown, which she had received from her new husband, and put on that ring instead which she had taken out of the cup, and likewise the crown sent to her by Saladin; and, leaving the bridegroom's house, she went home with all nuptial pomp along with Torello, whither his friends and relations, whom his loss rendered disconsolate, and all the citizens likewise, looking upon him as a miracle, went joyfully to see him, and pay him their respects. Part of the jewels Torello gave to him who had been at the expense of the marriage-feast, and part to the abbot, and to divers others; and having signified his happy arrival to Saladin, he remained from that time his friend and faithful servant, living many years afterwards with his most worthy spouse, and continuing more generous and hospitable than ever. This, then, was the end of both their afflictions, and the reward of their most cheerful and ready courtesy. Many there are that attempt the like, who, though they have the means, do it yet with such an ill grace, as turns rather to their discredit. If therefore, no merit ensue from thence, neither they nor any one else ought to be surprised.

NOVEL X

The Marquis of Saluzzo having been prevailed upon by his subjects to marry, in order to please himself in the affair, made choice of a countryman's daughter, by whom he had two children, which he pretended to put to death. Afterwards, seeming as though he was weary of her, and had taken another, he had his own daughter brought home, as if he had espoused her, whilst his wife was sent away in a most distressed condition. At length, being convinced of her patience, he brought her home again, presented her children to her, who were now of considerable years, and ever afterwards loved and honoured her as his lady.

THE king's long novel being concluded, which had all the appearance of pleasing, Dioneus, as the only person left to speak, began in this manner:—

We seem, to-day, most gracious ladies, to have had only to do with kings, soldans, and such-like people: therefore, that I may not be left too far behind, I intend to speak of a marquis; not with regard to anything noble and great, but rather monstrously vile and brutish, although it ended well at last; which, notwithstanding the event, I would yet advise nobody to imitate.

It is a long time ago, that, amongst the marquises of Saluzzo, the principal or head of the family was a youth, called Gualtieri, who, as he was a bachelor, spent his whole time in hawking and hunting, without any thought of ever being encumbered with a wife and children; in which respect, no doubt, he was very wise. But this being disagreeable to his subjects, they often pressed him to marry, to the end he might neither die without an heir, nor they be left without a lord; offering themselves to provide such a lady for him, and of such a family, that they should have great hopes from her, and the reason enough to be satisfied. "Worthy friends," he replied, "you urge me to do a thing which I was fully resolved against, considering what a difficult matter it is

to find a person of a suitable temper, with the great abundance everywhere of such as are otherwise, and how miserable also the man's life must be who is tied to a disagreeable woman. As to your getting at a woman's temper from her family, and so choosing one to please me, ~~that~~ seems quite a ridiculous fancy: for, besides the uncertainty with regard to their true fathers, how many daughters do we see resembling neither father nor mother? Nevertheless, as you are so fond of having me noosed, I will agree to be so. Therefore, that I may have nobody to blame but myself, should it happen amiss, I will make my own choice; and I protest, let me marry whom I will, that, unless you show her the respect that is due to her as my lady, you shall know, to your cost, how grievous it is to me to have taken a wife at your request, contrary to my own inclination." The honest men replied that they were well satisfied, provided he would but make the trial.

Now he had taken a fancy, some time before, to the behaviour of a poor country girl, who lived in a village not far from his palace; and thinking that he might live comfortably enough with her, he determined, without seeking any farther, to marry her. Accordingly he sent for her father, who was a very poor man, and acquainted him with it. Afterwards he summoned all his subjects together and said to them, "Gentlemen, it was and is your desire that I take a wife: I do it rather to please you, than out of any liking I have to matrimony. You know that you promised me to be satisfied, and to pay her due honour, whoever she is that I shall make choice of. The time is now come when I shall fulfil my promise to you, and I expect you to do the like to me: I have found a young woman in the neighbourhood after my own heart, whom I intend to espouse, and bring home in a very few

days. Let it be your care, then, to do honour to my nuptials, and to respect her as your sovereign lady; so that I may be satisfied with the performance of your promise, even as you are with that of mine." The people all declared themselves pleased, and promised to regard her in all things as their mistress. Afterwards they made preparations for a most noble feast, and the like did the prince; inviting all his relations, and the great lords in all parts and provinces about him: he had also most rich and costly robes made, shaped by a person that seemed to be of the same size with his intended spouse; and provided a girdle, ring, and fine coronet, with everything requisite for a bride. And when the day appointed was come, about the third hour he mounted his horse, attended by all his friends and vassals; and having everything in readiness, he said, "My lords and gentlemen, it is now time to go for my new spouse." So on they rode to the village, and when he was come near the father's house, he saw her carrying some water from the well, in great haste, to go afterwards with some of her acquaintance to see the new marchioness; when he called her by name, which was Griselda, and inquired where her father was. She modestly replied, "My gracious lord, he is in the house."

He then alighted from his horse, commanding them all to wait for him, and went alone into the cottage, where he found the father, who was called Giannucolo, and said to him, "Honest man, I am come to espouse thy daughter; but would first ask her some questions before thee." He then inquired whether she would make it her study to please him, and not be uneasy at any time, whatever he should do or say; and whether she would always be obedient; with more to that purpose. To which she answered, "Yes." He then led her out by the hand, and

made her strip before them all; and ordering the rich apparel to be brought which he had provided, he had her clothed completely, and a coronet set upon her head, all disordered as her hair was; after which, every one being in amaze, he said, "Behold, this is the person whom I intend for my wife, provided she will accept of me for her husband." Then, turning towards her, who stood quite abashed, "Will you," said he, "have me for your husband?" She replied, "Yes, if so please your lordship."—"Well," he replied, "and I take you for my wife." So he espoused her in that public manner, and mounting her on a palfrey, conducted her honourably to his palace, celebrating the nuptials with as much pomp and grandeur as though he had been married to the daughter of the King of France; and the young bride shewed apparently that with her garments she had changed both her mind and behaviour. She had a most agreeable person, and was so amiable, so good-natured withal, that she seemed rather a lord's daughter than that of a poor shepherd; at which everyone that knew her before was greatly surprised. She was, too, so obedient to her husband and so obliging in all respects, that he thought himself the happiest man in the world; and to her subjects likewise so gracious and condescending that they all honoured and loved her as their own lives; praying for her health and prosperity, and declaring, contrary to their former opinion, that Gualtieri was the most prudent and sharp-sighted prince in the whole world; for that no one could have discerned such virtues under a mean habit and country disguise, but himself. In a very short time, his discreet behaviour and good works were the common subject of discourse, not in that country only, but everywhere else; and what had been objected to the prince, with regard to his marrying her, now took a contrary turn.

They had not lived long together before she proved with child, and at length brought forth a daughter, for which he made great rejoicings. But soon afterwards a new fancy came into his head; and that was to make a trial of her patience by long and intolerable sufferings: so he began with harsh words, and an appearance of great un-easiness; telling her that his subjects were greatly displeased with her for her mean parentage, especially as they saw she bore children; and that they did nothing but murmur at the daughter already born. Which, when she heard, without changing countenance, or her resolution in any respect, she replied, "My lord, pray dispose of me as you think most for your honour and happiness: I shall entirely acquiesce, knowing myself to be meaner than the meanest of the people, and that I was altogether unworthy of that dignity to which your favour was pleased to advance me." This was very agreeable to the prince, seeing that she was no way elevated with the honour he had conferred upon her. Afterwards, having often told her, in general terms, that his subjects could not bear with the daughter that was born of her, he sent one of his servants, whom he had instructed what to do, who, with a very sorrowful countenance, said to her, "Madam, I must either lose my own life, or obey my lord's commands: now he has ordered me to take your daughter, and—" without saying anything more.

She, hearing these words, and noting the fellow's looks, remembering also what she had heard before from her lord, concluded that he had orders to destroy the child. So she took it out of the cradle, kissed it, and gave it her blessing; when, without changing countenance, though her heart throbbed with maternal affection, she tenderly laid it in the servant's arms, and said, "Take it, and do what thy lord and mine has commanded; but

prithee leave it not to be devoured by the fowls or wild beasts, unless that be his will." Taking the child, he acquainted the prince with what she said; who was greatly surprised at her constancy, and he sent the same person with it to a relation at Bologna, desiring her, without revealing whose child it was, to see it carefully brought up and educated. Afterwards the lady became with child the second time, and was delivered of a son, at which he was extremely pleased.—But, not satisfied with what he had already done, he began to grieve and persecute her still more; saying one day to her, seemingly much out of temper, "Since thou hast brought me this son, I am able to live no longer with my people; for they mutiny to that degree, that a poor shepherd's grandson is to succeed, and be their lord after me, that, unless I would run the risk of being driven out of my dominions, I must be obliged to dispose of this child as I did the other; and then to send thee away, in order to take a wife more suitable to me." She heard this with a great deal of resignation, making only this reply: "My lord, study only your own ease and happiness, without the least care for me; for nothing is agreeable to me but what is pleasing to yourself." Not many days after, he sent for the son in the same manner as he had done for the daughter; and, seeming also as if he had procured him to be destroyed, had him conveyed to Bologna, to be taken care of with the daughter. This she bore with the same resolution as before, at which the prince wondered greatly, declaring to himself that no other woman was capable of doing the like. And, were it not that he had observed her extremely fond of her children, whilst that was agreeable to him, he should have thought it want of affection in her; but he saw it was only her entire obedience and condescension. The people, imagining that the children were both put to death,

blamed him to the last degree, thinking him the most cruel of men, and shewing great compassion for the lady. Who, whenever she was in company with the ladies of her acquaintance, that they condoled with her for her loss, she would only say, "It was not my will, but his who begot them." But more years being now passed and he resolving to make the last trial of her patience, declared, before many people, that he could no longer bear to keep Griselda as his wife, owning that he had done very foolishly, and like a young man, in marrying her, and that he meant to solicit the pope for a dispensation to take another, and send her away: for which he was much blamed by many worthy persons; but he said nothing in return, only that it should be so. She, hearing this, and expecting to go home to her father's, and possibly tend the cattle as she had done before; whilst she saw some other lady possessed of him whom she dearly loved and honoured, was perhaps secretly grieved; but as she had withstood other strokes of fortune, so she determined resolutely to do now.

Soon afterwards, Gualtieri had counterfeit letters come to him, as from Rome, acquainting all his people that his holiness thereby dispensed with his marrying another, and turning away Griselda; he had her brought before them, when he said, "Woman, by the pope's leave I may dispose of thee, and take another wife. As my ancestors, then, have been all sovereign princes of this country, and thine only peasants, I intend to keep thee no longer, but to send thee back to thy father's cottage, with the same portion which thou broughtest me; and afterwards to make choice of one more suitable in quality to myself." It was with the utmost difficulty she could now refrain from tears; and she replied, "My lord, I was always sensible that my

servile condition would no way accord with your high rank and descent. For what I have been, I own myself indebted to Providence and you; I consider it as a favour lent me: you are now pleased to demand it back; I, therefore, willingly restore it. Behold the ring with which you espoused me; I deliver it to you. You bid me take the dowry back which I brought you; you will have no need for a teller to count it, nor I for a purse to put it in, much less a sumpter-horse to carry it away; for I have not forgotten that you took me naked and if you think it decent to expose that body which has borne you two children in that manner, I am contented; but I would entreat you, as a recompense for my virginity, which I brought you, and do not carry away, that you would please to let me have one shift over and above my dowry." He, though ready to weep, yet put on a stern countenance, and said, "Thou shalt have one only then." And, notwithstanding the people all desired that she might have an old gown, to keep her body from shame who had been his wife thirteen years and upwards, yet it was all in vain. So she left his palace in that manner, and returned weeping to her father's, to the great grief of all who saw her. The poor man, never supposing that the prince would keep her long as his wife, and expecting this thing to happen every day, had safely laid up the garments of which she had been despoiled the day he espoused her. He now brought them to her, and she put them on, and went as usual about her father's little household affairs, bearing this fierce trial of adverse fortune with the greatest courage imaginable. The prince then gave it out that he was to espouse a daughter of one of the counts of Panago; and, seeming as if he made great preparation for his nuptials, he sent for Griselda to come to him, and said to her, "I am going to bring this lady home whom I have just

married, and intend to shew her all possible respect at her first coming: thou knowest that I have no women with me able to set out the rooms, and do many other things which are requisite on so solemn an occasion. As, therefore, thou art best acquainted with the state of the house, I would have thee make such provision as thou shalt judge proper, and invite what ladies thou wilt, even as though thou wert mistress of the house; and when the marriage is ended, return thee home to thy father's again." Though these words pierced like daggers to the heart of Griselda, who was unable to part with her love for the prince so easily as she had done her great fortune, yet she replied, "My lord, I am ready to fulfil all your commands." She then went into the palace, in her coarse attire from whence she had but just before departed in her shift, and with her own hands did she begin to sweep, and set all the rooms to rights, cleaning the stools and benches in the hall like the meanest servant, and directing what was to be done in the kitchen, never giving over till everything was in order, and as it ought to be. After this was done, she invited, in the prince's name, all the ladies in the country to come to the feast. And on the day appointed for the marriage, meanly clad as she was, she received them in the most genteel and cheerful manner imaginable.

Now Gualtieri, who had his children carefully brought up at Bologna (the girl being about twelve years old, and one of the prettiest creatures that ever was seen, and the boy six), had sent to his kinswoman there to desire she would bring them, with an honourable retinue, to Saluzzo, giving it out all the way she came that she was bringing the young lady to be married to him, without letting any one know to the contrary.

Accordingly, they all set forwards, attended by a

goodly train of gentry; and, after travelling some days, reached Saluzzo about dinner-time, when they found the whole country assembled, waiting to see their new lady. The young lady was most graciously received by all the women present; and being come into the hall where the tables were all covered, Griselda, meanly dressed as she was, went cheerfully to meet her, saying, "Your ladyship is most kindly welcome." The ladies, who had greatly importuned the prince, though to no purpose, to let Griselda be in a room by herself, or else that she might have some of her own clothes, and not appear before strangers in that manner, were now seated, and going to be served round; whilst the young lady was universally admired, and everyone said that the prince had made a good change; but Griselda in particular highly commend-ed both her and her brother. The marquis now thinking that he had seen enough with regard to his wife's patience, and perceiving that in all her trials she was still the same, being persuaded likewise that this proceeded from no want of understanding in her, because he knew her to be singularly prudent, he thought it time to take her from that anguish which he supposed she might conceal under her firm and constant deportment. So, making her come before all the company, he said, with a smile, "What thinkest thou, Griselda, of my bride?"—"My lord," she replied, "I like her extremely well; and if she be as pru-dent as she is fair, you may be the happiest man in the world with her: but I most humbly beg you would not take those heart-breaking measures with this lady as you did with your last wife; because she is young, and has been tenderly educated, whereas the other was inured to hardships from a child."

Gualtieri perceiving, that though Griselda thought that person was to be his wife, that she nevertheless

answered him with great humility and sweetness of temper, he made her sit down by him, and said, "Griselda, it is now time for you to reap the fruit of your long patience, and that they who have reputed me to be cruel, ~~and~~ just, and a monster in nature, may know that what I have done has been all along with a view to teach you how to behave as a wife; to shew them how to choose and keep a wife; and, lastly, to secure my own ease and quiet as long as we live together, which I was apprehensive might have been endangered by my marrying. Therefore I had a mind to prove you by harsh and injurious treatment; and not being sensible that you have ever transgressed my will, either in word or deed, I now seem to have met with that happiness I desired: I intend, then, to restore in one hour what I have taken away from you in many, and to make you the sweetest recompense for the many bitter pangs I have caused you to suffer. Accept, therefore, this young lady, whom you thought my spouse, and her brother, as your children and mine. They are the same which you and many others believed that I had been the means of cruelly murdering; and I am your husband, who love and value you above all things; assuring myself that no person in the world can be happier in a wife than I am."

With this he embraced her most affectionately, when, rising up together (she weeping for joy), they went where their daughter was sitting, quite astonished with these things, and tenderly saluted both her and her brother, undeceiving them and the whole company. At this the women all arose, overjoyed, from the tables, and taking Griselda into the chamber, they clothed her with her own noble apparel, and as a marchioness, resembling such an one even in rags, and brought her into the hall. And being extremely rejoiced with her son and daughter, and

every one expressing the utmost satisfaction at what had come to pass, the feasting was prolonged many days. The marquis was judged a very wise man, though abundantly too severe, and the trial of his lady most intolerable; but as for Griselda, she was beyond compare. In a few days the Count da Panago returned to Bologna, and the marquis took Giannucolo from his drudgery, and maintained him as his father-in-law, and so he lived very comfortably to a good old age.

Gualtieri afterwards married his daughter to one of equal nobility, continuing the rest of his life with Griselda, and shewing her all the respect and honour that was possible. What can we say, then, but that divine spirits may descend from heaven into the meanest cottages; whilst royal palaces shall produce such as seem rather adapted to have the care of hogs, than the government of men. Who but Griselda could, not only without a tear, but even with seeming satisfaction, undergo the most rigid and unheard of trials of her husband? Many women there are who, if turned out of doors naked in that manner, would have procured themselves fine clothes, adorning at once their own persons and their husbands' brows.

Dioneus's novel, which was now concluded, was much canvassed by the company, this blaming one thing, and that commanding another, according to their respective fancies; when the king, seeing the sun was now far in the west, and that the evening drew on apace, said, without rising from his seat, "I suppose you all know, ladies, that a person's sense and understanding consist, not only in remembering things past, or knowing the present; but to be able, by both these means, to foresee what is to come, is, by the more knowing part of mankind judged the greatest proof of wisdom. To-morrow,

you are sensible, it will have been fifteen days since we, by way of amusement, and for the preservation of our lives, came out of Florence, avoiding all those cares and melancholy reflections which continually haunted us in the city, since the beginning of that fatal pestilence.—And, in my opinion, we have done honestly and well. For, though some light things have been talked of, and a loose given to all sorts of innocent mirth, yet am I not conscious of anything blameworthy that has passed among us; but everything has been decent, everything harmonious, and such as might well beseem the community of brothers and sisters.

Lest, therefore, something should happen, which might give us uneasiness, and make people put a bad construction upon our being so long together, now all have had their days, and their shares of honour, which at present rests in me, I hold it most advisable for us to return from whence we came. Besides, as people know of our being together, our company may probably increase, which would make it entirely disagreeable. If you approve of it, then, I will keep the power till to-morrow, that we depart; but if you resolve otherwise; I have a person in my eye to succeed me.” This occasioned great debates, but at last ~~it~~ was thought safest and best to comply with the king. He consequently called the master of the household, and, after giving proper directions for the next morning, dismissed them all till supper-time. They now betook themselves, as usual, some to one thing, and some to another, for their amusement; and, when the hour came, supped very agreeably together, after which they began their music; and whilst Lauretta led up a dance, the king ordered Flammetta to sing a song, which she did in a pretty, easy manner, as follows:

SONG

CHORUS

Did love no jealous cares infest,
No nymph on earth would be so blest.

I

If sprightliness, and blooming youth,
An easy and polite address,
Strict honour, and regard for truth,
Are charms which may command success:
Then sure you will my choice approve,
For these all centre in my love.

CHORUS. Did love, &c.

II

But when I see what arts are tried,
By nymphs as fair and wise as I,
A thousand fears my heart betide,
Lest they should rob me of my joy:
Thus that for which I triumph'd so
Becomes the cause of all my woe.

CHORUS. Did love, &c.

III

Would he prove firm to my desire,
No more I should myself perplex,
But virtues like to his inspire
The same regard in all our sex:
This makes me dread what nymph be nigh
And watch each motion of his eye.

CHORUS. Did love, &c.

IV

Hence, then, ye damsels, I implore,
As you regard what's just and fit,
That you, by am'rous wiles, no more
This outrage on my love commit:
For know, whilst thus you make me grieve,
You shall repent the pain you give.

CHORUS

Did love no jealous cares infest,
No nymph on earth would be so blest.

THE DECAN ~~ON~~

As soon as Flammetta had finished her song, Dioneus, who sat close to her, laughed and said, "Madam, it would be kind to let ladies know whom you mean, for fear some other should take possession out of ignorance, and you have cause to be offended." This song was followed by many others, and, it now drawing near midnight, they all went, at the king's command, to repose themselves. By break of day they arose, and, the master of the household having sent away their carriages, returned, under the conduct of their discreet king, to Florence, when the three gentlemen left the seven ladies in New St. Mary's church, where they first met, going from thence where it was most agreeable to themselves; and the ladies, when they thought fit, repaired to their several houses.

THE END

